CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELATION BETWEEN MIND AND BODY IN NIBBĀNA OF THE THERAVĀDA AND THE MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM

INTRODUCTION

The Buddha stated that the attainment of Nibbāna - a state of liberation – alone could put an end to suffering. A righteous life leads to the understanding of the Four Noble Truths and the righteous life is based on the Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path explains the eight stages in the development of an aspirant to attain Nibbāna. The perfect state of Nibbāna is a positive state above all contradictions.

Nibbāna is the mystic experience of the holy existence. I.C. Sharma writes that having attained the spiritual state, the individual does not return to physical existence, as to the contrary of the Christian notion of mystic or holy experience and as the Bhagavadgītā’s concept of the Sthita–Prajña depict. “Buddhahood is the last stage attainable in this life and is therefore the state of perfection, brilliance, enlightenment, freedom. Nirvāṇa”.

Nibbāna is a state of inner peace, intuition of truth, and of love for all beings in this universe. Love and compassion are positive forces whereas anger and hatred are negative forces. Negative forces are harmful. We have to train our mind and strive to reduce the negative forces: otherwise they will disrupt our lives and affect our physical, mental and spiritual being.

A study of the relation between mind and body, of the necessity to control the undisciplined mind that harbours selfishness leads to the conclusion that every action, every movement of the aspirant must be the reflection of his righteous character. A harmonious development of the individual and society depends on pure character – Sila. It is cultivated through the ten stages or Bhūmis for the attainment of Nirvāṇa, says Mahāyāna School of Buddhism. At each stage there is the interaction between mind and body. Even though the aspirant is completely detached in his actions – like the stage of Jīvanmukti in the teachings of Vedānta – he continues to work for the well being of others. Thus the relation of mind and body paves the way for the ethical growth of the aspirant.

1 I C. Sharma, Ethical Philosophies of India. p. 168
This chapter is an attempt to study the relation between mind and body in Nibbāna, both of Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism, and study the method of attainment Nibbāna of the Noble One (Ariya Puggala). First the Nibbāna in Theravāda is explained, and then Nirvāṇa in Mahāyāna.

5.1. THE MEANING AND NATURE OF SUFFERING

Basically, the Buddha’s teachings concern the cause of suffering and how to think and act in a way that brings release from it. The meaning of suffering is very wide, covering all that one understands such as “Birth is suffering, the decrepitude of Old Age is suffering, Disease is suffering, Death is suffering, Association with Enemies is suffering, Separation from Friends is suffering, Failure to Obtain what one Desires is suffering; in brief, the Five Elements of being which spring from Attachment are involved in suffering”. The tanhā (craving) is the cause of suffering and of the ever-continuing cycle of rebirths. The tanhā is of three kinds:

1. Kāma-tanhā : The sensual craving,
2. Bhava-tanhā : The craving for existence,

The term ‘dukkha’ to mean ‘suffering’ is used in Theravāda Buddhism. This means that Buddhism has devoted its attention to the thought and practice of freedom from suffering. Unlike other theories or systems based on various speculations and suppositions, Theravāda is the outcome of exact knowledge and real experience. The enlightenment of the Buddha consists of the discovery of the Four Noble Truths (Cattāri Ariya Saccāni):

1. Dukkha: The universality of suffering.
2. Samudaya: The cause of suffering or origin of suffering.
3. Nirodha: The ending to desire, suffering comes to an end (Nibbāna).
4. Magga: The way to end desire and hence to end suffering, is to follow the Eightfold Noble Path – the Middle Way (Majjhima Patipadā).

Dwight Goddard has given the meaning of the Four Noble Truths in “A Buddhist Bible” as:

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2 Eugene Watson Burlingame (Tr.), Buddhist Legends, Books 1-2, p. 17
"The First Truth: The Noble Truth of Suffering, that is, Birth is suffering; Decay is suffering; Death is suffering; Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and Despair are suffering; not to get what one desires is suffering; in short: The Five Aggregates of Existence are suffering...

The Second Truth: The Noble Truth of the Origin of suffering, that is, it is that craving which gives rise to fresh rebirth, and bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight...

The Third Truth: The Noble Truth of the Extinctions of suffering, that is, it is the complete fading away and extinction of this craving, its forsaking and giving up, the liberation and detachment from it...

The Fourth Truth: The Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Extinctions of suffering, that is, to give oneself up to indulgence in sensual pleasure, the base, common, vulgar, unholy, unprofitable, and also to give oneself up to self-mortification, the painful, unholy, unprofitable; both these two extremes the Perfect One has avoided and found out the Middle Path which makes one both to see and to know, which leading to peace, to discernment, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna..."{3

In the first sermon, while referring to the Four Noble Truths, the Buddha had declared that “it was not until his knowledge and various regarding these four Truths were fully clear to him, did he declare to the world that he had attained the perfect Enlightenment"{4 Therefore the Noble Eightfold Path alone is the special way of leading to the cessation of suffering. The Buddha had been searching for this theory of solution of the suffering (dukkha) and found it.

5.2. THE THEORY OF ESCAPE FROM SUFFERING

Suffering is the main problem of the world. In ancient times, many thinkers and philosophers had tried experiments on themselves to escape from suffering. They had tried to search for a theory to escape from suffering, that is, ‘prayer to God, sacrifice, self-mortification, fire worship and so on’, which each person could perform in different ways to escape from suffering. The Buddha also tried to escape from

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suffering, when He saw the three divine messengers, old age, illness, and death. He thought that old age, illness, and death were the reality of the world.

When He met ascetics, He obtained the reply that this strange person was a religious recluse who had renounced the world in search of the way to escape from suffering, and thought that everything in this world exists in pairs like hot and cold, day and night, light and shade, long and short, black and white, death and no death, that is, 'birth'. The 'person' said that birth, old age, disease, and death constituted suffering. Through different theories, the Buddha has sought a method to escape from suffering, and has expounded the Four Noble Truths. According to Bhikkhu Bodhi, the meaning of the characteristics of the Noble One (The Buddha and His disciples) who has attained the Four Noble Truths, is as follows:

We called Him that Sammāsambuddha (The Fully Enlightened One);

Because He is the One who has fully understood by Himself the ultimate nature of all phenomena both in their particular and universal characteristics. The term implies the direct knowledge of all realities gained without help from a teacher. The Buddha is also called the Peerless One (atula) because His qualities and attributes cannot be matched by any other being. Though all Arahants possess the distinguished qualities of morality, concentration, and wisdom sufficient to result in liberation, none possess the innumerable and immeasurable virtues with which a supreme Buddha is fully endowed with the ten Tathāgata's powers of knowledge, the four grounds of self-confidence, the attainment of great compassion, and the unobstructed knowledge of omniscience.5

The many titles of the Buddha into relatively of epithet-lists was one of the most important ways in which early buddhalogical thought developed; and while it is not central to the buddhalogy of the doctrinal digests, it will be useful to pass the most important of these lists in brief review here, since it shows very clearly the thrust toward maximal greatness, as well as giving some hint of what, substantively, counted as epoch-making properties for Buddhist theorists.

All of the following words are used for addressing the Buddha:

(1) thus-gone (tathāgata); (2) worthy (arahant); (3) fully and completely awakened (samyaksamuddha); (4) accomplished in knowledge and virtuous conduct (vidyācaranāsampanna); (5) well-gone (sugata); (6) knower of worlds (lokavid); (7) unsurpassed guide for those who need restraint (anuttarāḥ puruṣadāmya sārathih); (8) teacher of gods and humans (śāstā devamanusyānām); (9) awakened (buddha); and (10) blessed (bhagavat).⁶

Therefore He was the first one who got enlightenment and enlightened by Himself only, and came out with these Four Noble Truths or calls it as “Nibbāna” (Summum Bonum). Nibbāna is the one and only way of escape from the cycle of existence and suffering of humanity.

5.3. THE NIBBĀNA: THE ULTIMATE REALITY

The state of ideal life is a life without defilements, without pain and suffering, brim-full of purity and maximum pleasure. There are no discriminations in life in that state, there are no masters and servants, and there are no fortunates and unfortunates. They are equal in everyway and their pleasures are the same. That serene state of life is the supreme state of existence. It is the peaceful plateau at the summit of life from which no one falls again to the vicissitudes that life has below. It is the state of Nibbāna, the everlasting blossom, the flower of life and mind. Absolute or perfect knowledge admits only the final purification of thought, which means the disappearance of consciousness, the complete destruction of the last thought element on Nibbāna.

Nibbāna is the highest goal, the ultimate objective of human aspiration and the sumnum bonum of rational life and was declared by the Lord Buddhas in his clarion voice to the suffering denizens of the three worlds⁷ as the panacea to the ills and sufferings of humanity.

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⁷ The three worlds (trāyādhatuḥ) are.
existence, to which all sentient beings from the amoeba to the highest god are subject without exception.  

The word ‘Nibbāna’ means Paramattha Dhamma (Ultimate Reality), there are four kinds namely, citta (consciousness), cetasika (mental factors arising together with consciousness), rūpa (physical phenomena), and Nibbāna (Supramundane Reality). (citta and cetasika are nāmas, which arise because of conditions and fall away again.

Only Nibbāna is nāma that is an unconditioned mental phenomenon. The Buddha, the Pacceka Buddha (a Buddha who has won enlightenment by himself, but does not teach others) and the Arahants (Worthy Ones) had realized Nibbāna (a Supramundane State). They had declared it to be not conditioned by any cause. Hence it is not subjected to any becoming, change, and dissolution. It is birthless (ajāta), decayless (ajara), and deathless (amara). Strictly speaking, Nibbāna is neither a cause nor an effect. Hence it is unique (kevala).

The word ‘Nibbāna’ is very difficult to be explained completely and satisfactorily in words, because our language is inadequate to explain or describe the real nature of the Absolute Truth or Ultimate Reality, which is Nibbāna. Language is created and used by human beings to express things and ideas experienced by their sense organs and mind. A Supramundane experience like that of the Absolute Truth does not fall under such a category. Words are symbols representing things and ideas known to us, but these symbols cannot fully convey the true nature of even ordinary things. Language is considered to be inadequate, deceptive and misleading in the matter of expressing the understanding of the Truth.

Nevertheless, without language, one cannot understand, since it is the vital mode of communication. But if Nibbāna is to be expressed and explained in positive terms, we are immediately likely to grasp an idea generally associated with those terms, which may be quite the contrary. Therefore it is generally expressed in negative terms - a less dangerous move perhaps. So it is often referred to by such negative terms as extinction of thirst, uncompounded, unconditioned, absence of desire, cessation, blowing out, or extinctive. It is the complete cessation of that very thirst, giving it up, renouncing it,

8 Satkavi Mookerjee, The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux: An Exposition of the Philosophy of Critical Realism as Expounded by the School of Dignāga, p. 237
emancipation and detachment from it.

The Buddha has explained the meaning of \textit{Nibbāna}, as follows:

\textit{O Bhikkhus}, there is the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned. Were there not the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned, there would be no escape for the born, grown, and conditioned. Since there is the unborn, ungrown, and unconditioned, so there is escape for the born, grown, and conditioned.\(^9\)

Therefore \textit{Nibbāna} is not the result of anything in the world. If it would be \textit{Sarīkhata} ‘produced’ and ‘conditioned’, then \textit{Nibbāna} becomes subjected to cause and effect. It is beyond cause and effect.

Nina Van Gorkom has explained the meaning of the term \textit{Nibbāna}:

\textit{Nibbāna} is a \textit{paramattha dhamma} because it is real. \textit{Nibbāna} is the end of defilements. \textit{Nibbāna} can be experienced through the mind-door if one follows the Right Path leading towards it:… \textit{Nibbāna} is the \textit{nāma}, which is an unconditioned reality (\textit{visaṅkhara dhamma}). It does not arise, because it is unconditioned and therefore it does not fall away. \textit{Citta} and \textit{cetasika} are \textit{nāmas}, which experience an object; \textit{Nibbāna} is the \textit{nāma}, which does not experience an object, but \textit{Nibbāna} itself can be the object of \textit{citta} and \textit{cetasika}, which experience it. \textit{Nibbāna} is not a person. It is not-self, \textit{anattā}.\(^{10}\)

\textit{Nibbāna} is termed as Supramundane Reality, and is realized by acquiring knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. It becomes an object of the paths and fruits and is called \textit{Nibbāna}, because it is a departure (\textit{nikkhaniatta}) from craving, which is an entanglement (\textit{vāna}). For as long as craving entangles one, one remains bound in \textit{samīsāra} (the cycle of birth and death); but when all cravings are extirpated, deliverance from the cycle of birth and death leads one to attain \textit{Nibbāna}.

5.3.1. The Meaning and Characteristics of \textit{Nibbāna}

\textit{Nibbāna} is regarded as the highest goal of a Buddhist aspirant among his endeavours. But it is not a place; it is a state of extreme happiness. Hence it may be


\(^{10}\) Nina Van Gorkom, \textit{Abhidhamma in Daily Life}, p. 10.
regarded as the central theme in Buddhist religion and philosophy. The word ‘Nibbāna’ belongs to Pāli language (Sanskrit equivalent Nirvāṇa), and is derived from the root ‘Ni’ (a negative particle) and ‘Vāna’ (lusting, craving, desire). Nibbāna is the total eradication of suffering and as such exquisite happiness of mind. The Buddha explained Nibbāna in terms, a non-Arahant would understand by using the experiences and terms of a non-Arahant. The Buddha said that Nibbāna is the destruction of greed, hate and delusion (roots of bad actions - Akusalamūla). “The word Nibbāna and Pannibbāna apparently were frequently used as synonyms indicating a state after death, higher than the Brahmā-world at the summit of the Rūpa-loka, and perhaps beyond and above the Arūpa-loka”.

Nibbāna is permanent (not wavering, unstable, constructed etc.), happiness (not a disease, a sickness, but a protection, cave of shelter, refuge, unborn, etc.), and it is even undisintegrating, not hollow, an essence, and not dependent on another. This concept was derived not at merely by intellectual analysis or by a process of elimination. On the contrary, “after following spiritual discipline for a long time, Buddha first experienced it and later preached that each and every individual could attain the blissful state”. Thus it is an absolute but positive state beyond all contradictions.

Early Buddhism had described the different aspects of Nibbāna by various words or terms. The commentary on the Nettipakaraṇa thus explains these terms:

Nibbāna is called uncompounded or absolute (asankhata), because it is not accounted for by any known casual factor: endless or infinite (ananta), because it knows no extermination; stainless (anāsava) because the influxes of sin have no hold on it, true or real (sacca); the other shore (pāra), because it makes for the further shore of the ocean of existence through saṁsāra; subtle (nipuṇa); ... Nibbāna is also known as saraṇa (ultimate refuge); virāga (detachment); accutapada (immutable state); mutti (liberation); Viśuddhi (purity); vimutti (emancipation); saddhi (holiness); and nibbuti (blessedness).

In the Kathāvatthu (supported by Buddhaghosa) the concept of Nibbāna has been

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11 Radhika Abeysekera, Practising the Dhamma with a View to Nibbāna. p 86
12 J.G. Jennings (Ed.), The Vedāntic Buddhism of the Buddha. p 481
13 Peter Harvey, The Selfless Mind: Personality, Consciousness and Nirvāṇa in Early Buddhism. p. 53
14 I.C. Sharma, op. cit., p. 166.
15 K. Krishna Murthy & K. Padmanabha, The Buddha - His Nirvāṇa and Mahāparinirvāṇa, pp. 28-29
explained as an eternal state without origin and decay, and does not consider a Pannihubhi (completely calmed) puggala as sassata (unchangeable). The Kathāvatthu remarks that:

Nibbanā is eternal and unchangeable...It also says that Nibbāna unlike āna (knowledge) exists by itself like rūpa or cakkhu and does not require any ārammanā (basis) to arise. Unlike sila (morality), phassa (contact) and vedanā (feeling), it is acetasika (not a property of the mind) and is unconnected with mind (citta-vippayutta). It is asaṅkhata (unconstituted) because it possesses the three signs, namely, no origination (uppāda), no destruction (vaya) and no change (na thitānā anāthattā paññāyati).  

The meaning of Nibbāna in Milinda’s Pañha, which Venerable Nāgasena has explained to King Milinda, is as follows:

‘Nibbāna is all bliss, and there is no pain mingled with it’...

‘Nibbāna...has nothing similar to it. By no metaphor, or explanation, or reason, or argument can its form, or figure, or duration, or measure be made clear’...

‘As water is cool and assuages heat, so also is Nibbāna cool, and assuages the fever arising from all evil dispositions...As water allays the thirst of men and beasts when they are exhausted and anxious, craving for drink, and tormented by thirst, so does Nibbāna allay the thirst of the craving after lusts, the craving after future life, and the craving after worldly prosperity’...

‘As medicine is the refuge of beings tormented by poison, so is Nibbāna the refuge of beings tormented with the poison of evil dispositions...As medicine puts an end to diseases, so does Nibbāna put an end to grief’s...As medicine is ambrosia (amata: immortality), so also is Nibbāna ambrosia’...

‘As the ocean is free from (empty of) corpses, so also is Nibbāna free from (empty of) the dead bodies of all evil dispositions’...  

The word ‘Amata’ also is used as a synonym for ‘Nibbāna’, and as standing for the destruction of passion (rāga), hatred (dosa), and confusion (moha), but in some places it is an attribute of Nibbāna as is mentioned below:

This is the *Nibbāna*, the uncompounded, the ultimate, free from defilements, the truth, the further shore, the subtle, very difficult to see, the unfading, the stable, the undecaying, the undifferentiated, the peaceful, the deathless, the excellent, the good, the security, destruction of craving, the wonderful, the marvellous, free from ill, the state free from ill, the harmless, the passionless, the purity, the release, the non-attachment, the island, the cave, the protection, the refuge and the goal which the well-accomplished One has taught.\(^{18}\)

To begin our discussion, the objective is to distinguish between *Nibbāna* in one’s lifetime (*Sa-upādīsesamībbāna*) from *Nibbāna* at death (*Anupādīsesamībbāna*) in the case where one will not return and the understanding of *Parinibbāna*.

According to Narada Thera, *Nibbāna* is not conditioned by any cause. Hence there is neither an arising nor a passing away. It is birthless, decayless, and deathless. It is neither a cause nor an effect.\(^{19}\)

*Nibbāna* is the summum bonum of Buddhism and the ultimate reality of what the Buddha taught. Buddhism is in essence a proclamation of the truth of *Nibbāna*, a clear statement, and a search for *Nibbāna*. K. Krishna Murthy and K. Padmanabha have explained the characteristic of *Nibbāna*, thus:

The word *Nibbāna* ‘mean the annihilation of passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). It is the waning out of all evils – the diminishing of the vicious and the weak in man, which is the negative aspect of his positive advance in becoming. In its negative aspect, it means the removal of greed, ill will, and dullness and also freedom from these; it may be variously described as comfort, end of ill, end of becoming, or life, end of craving and the rest. In its positive aspect, it means mental illumination conceived as light, in sight, state of feeling happiness, cool and calm and content, peace, safety, and self-mastery. Objectively considered, it means truth, the highest good, a supreme opportunity, a regulated life, communion with the best’.\(^{20}\)

\(^{18}\) K.N. Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavad Gītā*, p. 341
\(^{19}\) Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma or the Life and Teachings of The Buddha*, p. 257.
\(^{20}\) Dr. K. Krishna Murthy & Dr. K. Padmanabha, *op. cit*, p. 22.
5.3.2. Two Stages of Nibbāna: Sa-upādīsesa Nibbāna and Anupādīsesa Nibbāna

Nibbāna has two states; one state is that when Nibbāna is attained in this present life, but five aggregates are still remaining; it is called Sa-upādīsesa Nibbāna Dhātu or the cessation of defilements (kilesa-Parinibbāna). When an Arahant attains Parinibbāna after the dissolution of the body, without any remains of any physical existence, it is called Anupādīsesa Nibbāna Dhātu or the extinction of groups of existents (khandha-parinibbāna). These two states roughly correspond to the states of Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti as is explained in Indian philosophical systems. In fact, these are not two different kinds of Nibbāna, but one single Nibbāna receiving its name according to the experience of it before and after the death of an Arahant.

Both Nibbāna: Sa-upādīsesa and Anupādīsesa relate to an Arahant:

Herein, monks, a monk is an Arahant with cankers destroyed (Khīnāsavo), who has lived the life, laid down the burden, attained his own goal, the fetter (relating to) becoming utterly destroyed, released by perfect gnosis (sammādaññā-vimutto).

On ‘with remainder’ Nibbāna, it is said:

In him the five (senses) faculties still remain, through, which as they have not departed, he undergoes the pleasant and the unpleasant, he experiences happiness and suffering (dukkhaṁ). In him, that which is the destruction (khayaṅ) of attachment, hatred and delusion, this is called, monks, the element of Nibbāna with remainder of upādi.21

"The word ‘Sa’ means ‘with’, ‘together’; and ‘Upādi’ means ‘the five aggregates’. ‘Sesa’ means ‘remaining’. When all the pollutions are gradually destroyed and there remain the five aggregates in their immensely pure form, a state of Nibbāna is achieved, which is named as Sa-upādīsesa Nibbāna. It is achieved here and in this state of life. The man who attains this state remains here as a perfect and emancipated one. He is an Arahant. He lives here and experiences the ambrosial flavour as long as the karmic forces are at work in maintaining him like that. When the karmic forces reach exhaustion and the five aggregates disintegrate, a state of Nibbāna is achieved which is named an Anupādīsesa-Nibbāna. It is achieved after the expiry of life-process. It is the final

21 Peter Harvey, op. cit., pp. 180-81.
Nibbāna, technically expressed as Par nibbāna\textsuperscript{22}. The Blessed One had explained the meaning of both Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna and Anupādisesa Nibbāna in Iti-Vuttaka thus:

...A monk becomes sanctified here, if he, while living, hath destroyed his Taints – if he hath done that which ought to be done, if he hath laid aside his burdens, if he hath attained good welfare, if he hath destroyed the Fetters of Existence, if he is emancipated by Perfect Knowledge. He hath five moral qualities, namely, his mind is unimpeded, he experienced what is pleasant and unpleasant, and he cometh to know happiness and misery. His destruction of Passion, of Anger, of Ignorance, is called the Nibbāna Element of having the Substrata remaining (Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna).

...A monk becomes sanctified here, if which living, he hath done that which ought to be done, if he hath laid aside his burdens, if he hath attained good welfare, if he hath destroyed the Fetters of Existence, if he is emancipated by Perfect Knowledge. All his feelings, O monks, if not rejoiced in here will become cold. - This, O monks, is called the Nibbāna Element of not having the Substrata remaining (Anupādisesa Nibbāna).\textsuperscript{23}

The inexpressibility of the state of Nibbāna should not be misunderstood as nothingness in the sense of non-existence. According to the Mahayana School, the Buddha is reported to have said:

All the Buddhas and all the sentient beings are nothing but universal mind, besides which nothing exists. This mind, which has always existed, is unborn and indestructible. It is neither green, nor yellow, and has neither form nor appearance. It does not belong to the categories of things, which exist or do not exist, nor can it be reckoned as being new or old. It is neither long nor short, big nor small, but transcends all limits, names, speech and every method of treating it concretely ...it is like the boundless void which cannot be fathomed or measured.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{22} Prof. Mahesh Tiwary, Nāmarūpa - Paricchedo, p. 26
\textsuperscript{23} Justin Hartley Moore (Tr.), In.: Sayings of Buddha, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{24} E A Burtt, The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha, p. 195
5.4. THE FOUR ARIYAPUGGALAS (NOBLE ONES)

Theravāda Buddhism divided Ariyapuggala (Noble One) into four divisions:

1. Sotāpanna: Stream – Enterer,
2. Sakadāgāmī: Once – Returner,
3. Anāgāmī: Non – Returner,

The four Ariyapuggalas (Noble Ones), namely, Sotāpanna (Stream–Enterer), Sakadāgāmī (Once–Returner), and Anāgāmī (Non–Returner) Anāgāmī (Non–Returner) are Sekhapuggala (the learner one); only Arahant is Asekhapuggala (The non-learner one), as is described below:

5.4.1. Sotāpanna: Stream - Enterer

Sotāpanna: The One enterer to stream of Nibbāna or the real practice according to Ariyamagga (Noble Path), is one who is perfected in the level to Sila (moral), but he can be reduced, to some extent, in the level of Samādhi (meditation) and little in the level of Pañña (wisdom). He has destroyed the three lower Samyojanas (fetters), namely, Sakkāyadiṭṭhi (personality-belief), Vicikiccā (sceptical doubt) and Silabbata-parāmāsa, Upaddāna (clinging to mere rules and rituals), and reduced the strong three Akusala-mūlas (unwholesome roots), namely, Lobha (greed), Dosa (hatred) and Moha (delusion).\(^{25}\)

The Sotāpanna is called Ekahi (The Single-Seed), and Kolaṅkola (The Clan to Clan). One who has got rid of the three fetters (Somyojanas), has completed the silas (morality) and practised some degree of samādhi and pañña is usually called Sotāpanna. He is also called Sattakkhattupparamasa (the Seven Times a Most), because he will be reborn seven times more among men and gods before he can attain Nibbāna after getting rid of two more Orambhāgiya (Lower Fetters) namely, Kāmacchanda (sensual desire) and Byāpāda (Ill will), and five Uddhambhāgiya (Higher Fetters), namely, rūparāga (desire for life in the world of form), arūparāga (desire for life in the formless worlds), uddhacca (restlessness), māna (conceit), and moha (delusion). The doors of the states of punishments (āpāya) are shut for him.\(^{26}\)

\(^{25}\) Cf. Phrarajavaramuni (Prayudh Payutto), Buddhadhamma, (Thai Versions), p. 286.

5.4.2. Sakadāgāmī: Once - Returner

Sakadāgāmī : The Once-returner, like the Stream enterer, has completely destroyed the first three fetters of the lower group, like Sotāpanna, and can be reduced two more fetters. Also his spiritual state is so advanced that he is able to make a significant progress towards the destruction of such fetters as sensuality and hatred. In him, rāga (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion) are brought to the minimum. The Buddhist canonical texts inform us that the Once-returner has only once more to be reborn in the sensual realm before he attains the enlightenment of Nibbāna. In the Aṅguttara Nikāya, the Once-returner is described thus:

He trains himself in rules of the training by undertaking them. Such a one, by destroying three fetters, is destined to seven more births at most: seven times more at most he fares and wanders up and down among gods and mankind and makes an end of ill. Or, such a one again, by destroying three fetters, is a “one-seeder”: He takes just one birth as a man and then makes an end of ill. This monk, by destroying three fetters and weakening those of lust, malice and delusion, is a Once – returner. He comes back to this world only once and makes an end of ill. 27

According to the Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination), the Once-return path can be abandoned and exterminate the two fetters, as follows:

The two fetters, namely, the gross fetter of greed for sensual-desires (Kāmarāga) and the fetter of resistance (Paṭigha), are abandoned; and the two underlying tendencies, namely, the gross underlying tendency to greed for sensual – desires and the underlying tendency to resistance, are exterminated. 28

5.4.3. Anāgāmī: Non-Returner

Anāgāmī : The One who attained Nibbāna in his birthplace, does not return. He is perfect in the level of Sila (moral), Samādhi (meditation) and to some extent in the level Paññā (wisdom). He can destroy two more fetters namely, Kāmarāga (sensuous craving) and Paṭigha (repulsion). So, he can destroy perfect the five lower fetters. 29

27 Moti Lal Pandit, Buddhism in Perspective, p. 109
28 Pm. 288-89.
29 Cf., Phrarajavaramuni (Prayudh Payutto), op. cit., p. 286
The *Visuddhimagga* explains that an *Arahant* after completing the *citta*-practices becomes an *Anāgāmi*, namely, he will not be reborn any more in the *Kāmadhātu* (sensual element). He gets rid of the five *orambhāgiyas* (lower fetters) namely, *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* (Personality-Belief), *Vicikicchā* (Sceptical doubt), *Silabbatatāparāmāsa* (Clinging to mere Rules and Ritual), *Kāmacchanda* (Sensuous craving) and *Vyāpāda* (Ill-will), completely destroys *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha*, and *kāmāsava* (removes wholly), *bhāvāsava* (partially) and *avijjāsava* (ignorance defilement). He comes into existence as an *upapātika* (self-born) and attains *Nibbāna*.

5.4.4. *Arahant*: The Worthy One

An *Arahant* is called an *Asekha* (One who does not undergo training), because his duty as a trainee is completed. “An *Arahant* is one who has gained, with *arahattamagga*  niệm, complete understanding and full comprehension of the five aggregates which are the objects of clinging in all aspects. He has fulfilled the Noble Practice of Purity”. The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of illusion,-that is called *Arahantship*. The word ‘training’ means training to destroy the ten fetters (*Samyojanas*), which are as follows:

1. Personality-belief (*Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*),
2. Sceptical doubt (*Vicikicchā*),
3. Clinging to mere rules and rituals (*Silabbatatāparāmāsa; Upādāna*),
4. Sensuous Craving (*Kāma-Rāga*),
5. Ill-will (*Vyāpāda*), or Repulsion (*Paṭigha*),
6. Craving for fine-material existence (*Rūpa-Rāga*),
7. Craving for immaterial existence (*Arūpa-Rāga*),
8. Conceit (*Māna*),
9. Restlessness (*Uddhacca*), and
10. Ignorance (*Avijjā*).

The ideal man, the saint or sage at the highest stage of development is called

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30 *Nalinaksha Dutt. op cit.*, p. 118
31 *Kh.S* xi.
32 *S. IV. 171.
'Arahant'. The Buddhists themselves derived "the word 'Arahant' from the two words 'Ari', which means 'enemy', and 'han', means 'to kill', so that an Arahant would be 'A slayer of the foe', the foe being the passions. Modern scholars prefer to derive the word from 'Arahatt', 'to be worthy of', and meaning 'deserving worthy', to wit, of worship and gifts'. Therefore the term 'Arahant' means 'Noble One, Worthy One' who is not subjected to rebirth because he does not accumulate fresh karmic activities. The seeds of his reproduction have all been destroyed.

The Arahant is offered respect and worship on account of having attained the ultimate state of release or cessation. The state of cessation comes to be complete when all the binding fetters are destroyed. It is upon the destruction of fetters there emerges within the Arahant enlightenment in terms, by which he gains the intellectual grasp of the Buddha's teaching. According to the Theravāda tradition,

An Arahant is one who has realised the non-existence of the so-called abiding self. For the Mahāyānist mere realisation of the non-existence of self does not entitle one to complete Nibbāna. Also necessary is the realisation of non-existence of phenomenal entities. The Arahant, having realised the impermanent nature of the self, does not speak of it either in terms of feeling or non-feeling.

The Path leads to Arahantship is portrayed, in the 'early suttas', as one which builds up self-reliance and an inner centre of calmness:

Herein, monks, a monk fares along contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly conscious, mindful, so as to control covetousness and dejection with respect to the world; he fares along contemplating feelings in feelings...cittas in cittas... basic patterns (Dhammā-) in basic patterns...Thus, monks, a monk lives, with no other (person) as a refuge, (he lives) with Dhamma as an island, Dhamma as a refuge, with himself as an island (attādīpo), with himself as a refuge, with no other (Dhamma) as refuge. Keep to your own pastures, monks, range in your own native beat. Ranging there Māra (the Tempter) will not get a chance, he will not get an opportunity (for attack). It is thus by reason of undertaking

wholesome states, monks, that this goodness-power grows. 36

The Arahant’s self-contained nature is shown in many ways. For example, he is described as ‘one with a citta like a diamond’: his citta can ‘cut’ anything and is itself uncuttable: it cannot be affected by anything. Thus, the Buddha’s chief disciple, Sāriputta says, “he does not know of anything from whose alteration he would be caused sorrow or dukkha... The Arahant is ‘unsoiled’ by anything. It is said that a Tathāgata is like a lotus flower which ‘stands unsoiled by the water’ (water runs off it ‘like water from a duck’s back’), as he dwells ‘unsoiled (anupalitto) by the world’”. 37

The Arahant in several places is described in such a way as to suggest that he has broken down all barriers between ‘himself’ and ‘others’. He is said to have:

i)  ‘lifted the barrier’, i.e. got rid of spiritual ignorance;
ii)  ‘filled in the moat’, i.e. ended rebirth;
iii)  ‘pulled up the pillar’, i.e. got rid of craving;
iv)  ‘withdrawn the bolt’, i.e. got rid of the five spiritual fetters which lead to rebirth in the realm of sense-desire;
v)  become ‘a pure one with flag laid low, burden dropped, without fetter’, i.e. he has got rid of the ‘I am conceit’. 38

An Arahant has lived the holy life and has accomplished his objective. He is not affected by the suffering; though he is not wholly free from physical suffering and his experience of the bliss of deliverance is only intermittent, he is yet to cast off his material body. In Samyutta Nikāya: Mahā-Vagga had explained to a monk who had attained Arahathood, thus:

“When a monk, by seeing as they really are, the satisfaction in, the misery of, the escape from these five controlling powers, is freed without grasping, - such an one, monks, is called Arahant, destroyer of the āsavas, liver of the life, doer of the task, lifter of the burden, winner of his own welfare, one who has worn out the fetters of rebirth, one released by perfect insight”. 39

36 Peter Harvey, op cit. p 54
37 Ibid., p 58
38 Ibid., p. 60.
39 S V 170.
Therefore *Nibbāna* is undoubtedly the ultimate goal of all the Buddhists. When an aspirant attains *Nibbāna* or Arahathood, he can escape from suffering. *Nibbāna* is neither a mere nothingness nor a state of annihilation. It is inexpressible, because we cannot perceive it with our worldly knowledge. But that does not mean that there is no *Nibbāna*, as no one can say that there exists no light just because the blind man does not see it. The *Visuddhimagga* has explained the difference between one who has attained *Nirodha-Samapatti* (attainment of extinction) and a dead person thus: “In the corpse not only are the plastic forces of the body (that is, respiration), speech and mind stilled and quiescent, but also vitality is exhausted, heat is quenched, and the faculties are clear, although respiration, observation, and perception are stilled and quiescent”.40

According to Piyadassi Thera, the *Nibbāna* has two levels. They are:

A monk is an *Arahant*, one whose taints (*āsava*) are destroyed, who has lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained Arahantship by stages, destroyed completely the bond of becoming, one who is free through knowing rightly. As his faculties have not been demolished he experiences what is agreeable and disagreeable, he experiences pleasure and pain. The five aggregates remain. It is his extinction of lust, hate and delusion, monks, that is called the *Nibbāna* element with a basis remaining (*sa-upādisesa nibbānadadhātu*).

A monk is an *Arahant*, one whose taints are destroyed, who has lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained Arahantship by stages, destroyed completely the bond of becoming, one who is free through knowing rightly. All his feelings not being welcomed, not being delighted in (*anabhinanditāni*), will here and now become cool: it is this, monks that is called the *Nibbāna* element without a basis remaining (*Amupādisesa Nibbāna*).41

Therefore, the one known as ‘*Arahant*’ who has revised and practised the Four Noble Truths, attains *Nibbāna*, since tanhā (craving) which is the cause of suffering and of the ever-continuing cycle of rebirths has been destroyed completely. That is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. The term ‘*Nibbāna*’ is equivalent to the terms ‘*Nibbatti*’ (cool, peace, and happiness) and ‘*Vimuttī*’ (freedom) used in various *Suttas* to express

several experiences of mind. According to a certain classification we find seven kinds of experiences under the terms Nibbāna.

1. **Micchādiṭṭhi Nibbāna**: The wrong view,

2. **Sammati Nibbāna**: The happy, cool or fortunate,

3. **Tadanga Nibbāna**: The temporary peace of mind,

4. **Vikkhambhana Nibbāna**: The bliss experienced at these afore-said stages of Jhāna,

5. **Samuccheda Nibbāna**: The destruction,

6. **Patippassaddhi Nibbāna**: The cool of mind as experienced at the removal of mental fatigue,

7. **Nissarana Nibbāna or Nibbāna-Dhātu**: The departure or the element.\(^4^3\)

### 5.5. THE WAY LEADING TO NIBBĀNA

The purpose of human life is its Nirodha (the Cessation or Extinction suffering), namely, Nibbāna. The Noble Eightfold Path (Aṭṭhaṅgika-Magga) is the path leading to the cessation of suffering or to the state of Nibbāna. The Buddha shows a path (a method) to Nibbāna, further reducible to Sīla (moral), Samādhi (meditation) and Paññā (wisdom). This provides us with the motive, the cause, the purpose and the method of Buddhism. This is known as the ‘Middle Path’ (Majjhima Patipadā), because it avoids the extremes. “When a man has to reach the other shore, the Nibbāna, he has also to know the way that would enable him to reach that state”\(^4^4\).

1. The extreme \(\text{is}\) the search for happiness through the pleasures of the senses, which is low, common, unprofitable and the way of the ordinary people.

2. The extreme \(\text{is}\) the search for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism, which is ‘painful, unworthy and unprofitable’.

The Middle Way is the originality of the Buddha wherein lies his doctrine. He did not follow Brahmanism or Shaivism wholly. Between these two systems of religious

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\(^{42}\) *Micchādiṭṭhi* means wrong view. Materialists ignore religious practices and value only material things such as wealth, bodily comforts and sensual enjoyments. According to them the real happiness lies in the enjoyments of senses and apart from this they recognise no other happiness, no other Nibbāna.

\(^{43}\) Ven. Balangoda Anandamaitreya, *Buddhism: (Lectures and Essays on Buddhism)*, p. 73.

thought and praxis, He charted out His own course, which is termed as the Middle Path. In the first sermon, He gave to the five monks (*Pañcavaggiya*), the contents of the Middle Path after enlightenment; He describes the contents of the Middle Way as a path between the extremes of sensual indulgence and the ascetic self-torture.\(^45\)

The factors of Noble Eightfold Path or the Middle Path form leading to the extinction of suffering are:

1. Right Understanding (*Sammā-Dīthī*),
2. Right Thought (*Sammā-Saṅkappa*),
3. Right Speech (*Sammā-Vācā*),
4. Right Action (*Sammā-Kammaṇṭa*),
5. Right Livelihood (*Sammā-Ājīva*),
6. Right Effort (*Sammā-Vāyāma*),
7. Right Mindfulness (*Sammā-Sati*),
8. Right Concentration (*Sammā-Samādhi*).

The eightfold path is the Middle Way of spiritual praxis. The result of cultivation following these disciplines can be realisation of freedom from suffering, which, in Buddhist terminology, means the attainment of Nibbāna. The practices have traditionally been divided into the three levels:

1. Ethical conduct (*sīla*), which consists of right speech, right action, and right livelihood;
2. Mental discipline (*samādhi*), which is characterized by the practices of right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration;
3. Soteriological insight (*paññā*), which includes the practices of right understanding and right thought.\(^46\)

The major adherence to the famous eight-fold path inclusive of the three major practices, stated above, will certainly pave the way for external cleanliness and internal purification, which are essentially required for spiritual realization. The middle path, envisaged by the Buddha, avoiding the two extremes, is the golden mean, which makes the aspirant to develop restraints as well as inspiration to attain the goal namely,

\(^{46}\) Moti Lal Pandit, *Sūnyata: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 11
Nibbāna. Hence Nibbāna is simply the avoidance of two extremes namely, self-indulgence and self-mortification.

There are what are known as three characteristics, the three admonitions (Ovādapātimokkha) or the three major principles, which form an important part of practising the eightfold path of the Buddhists, namely;

1. Sabbatāpam Akaranam: Do not perform evil deeds (Sīla).
2. Kusalassūpasampadā: Cultivate good habits; be prepared to act properly always (Samāhi).
3. Sacittapariyodapanam: Make the mind pure and bright (Paññā).

The threefold practising explains the main points of the best way to put an end to dukkha (suffering); as mentioned earlier, they, therefore, encompass all the various processes in this effort.

5.5.1. The Concept of the Aṭṭhāṅgika-Magga (The Eightfold Path)

The Eightfold Path is a program of training designed to promote attainment of the ideal state Nibbāna. Since the Four Noble Truths insist that it is necessary only to eliminate craving – the cause of suffering in order to attain Nibbāna, the need for the instructions of the Eightfold Path might be questioned. Our oft-used comparison to a physician’s treatment of illness may help explain their purpose.

When we have a problem with our eyes, the most natural thing is to apply eye medicine; when our lungs bother us, we take medication for a lung disease or undergo lung surgery. But the source of an eye problem may not be in the organ of sight. The problem could result from a vitamin deficiency or malfunctioning kidneys; and many times health problems have indirect causes, such as fatigue.

Since the elements of our mental and spiritual being are even more intricately connected than those of our physical being, eliminating craving alone will not eliminate suffering. For true development, the entire mental and spiritual being must be improved. All delusions and impediments to attain the ideal state of enlightenment must be eliminated, and the mind must be liberated to work in a free, healthy way. The program of religious practices set forth in the Eightfold Path stimulates just this kind of overall mental development and personal perfection.
The meaning of each factor of the Middle Path or Eightfold Path will be considered here in order to gain a more systematic understanding of the Path. Let us, therefore, discuss at least some of the important aspects of the Path.

5.5.1.1. Right Understanding (Sammā-Diṭṭhi)

The first step on the Eightfold Path is right understanding or the correct Buddhist interpretation of the world and mankind. Understanding is the Twelve Paṭiccasamuppādas (The Chain of Simultaneous Dependent Originations) and the Four Noble Truths. Should one understand them but one should make people understand that the basis of all one’s thinking and understanding of life is the basis of Buddhist teachings; one should make them the basis for a life of patient and humble acceptance and submission.

The importance of Right Understanding: Right Understanding is the element of the starting point of the Eightfold Path. Unless the correct Buddhist understanding about the world and mankind is kept in mind constantly, it is impossible to understand the other seven steps of the path. The Pāli canon describes, in detail, Right Understanding, thus:

Bhikkhus, of all the factors of the Path, right understanding leads the way. How does right understanding lead the way? Through right understanding we come to know wrong understanding (micchā-diṭṭhi) as wrong understanding and right understanding as right understanding; we come to know wrong thought as improper thought and right thought as right thought; we come to know wrong speech ... right speech ... wrong action ... right action...\(^{47}\)

Bhikkhus eliminate ignorance (avijjā), cultivate knowledge (vijjā), and attain Nibbāna through right understanding and right contemplation of the Path. How is this possible? Because of having established right understanding.\(^{48}\)

Right Understanding is the starting point or the guide for anyone beginning the journey along the Middle Path; it is the principle-supporting factor that plays a

\(^{47}\) M. III. 76, quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, Buddhadhamma: Natural laws and Values for Life, p. 196.

\(^{48}\) See S. V 43-49, quoted by Ibid., p. 196.
continuous role at each step of the way. At any rate, for a person proceeding along the Path, Right Understanding is not simply a refuge or just a factor supporting the other factors. Right Understanding itself receives assistance from other factors of the Path as well; Right Understanding continues to mature, be tempered, clarified and purified. And finally, it becomes an important factor leading to the final goal of the Path. We can say that Right Understanding is both the starting and the end point of the Path.

This gradual process and evolution of Right Understanding along the Path show that at different stages of practice Right Understanding has different levels of quality. It is for this reason that the meaning of Right Understanding will be different in its initial phases than in its final phase. Also, these meanings may not coincide with the meaning of the term as is commonly used. In the beginning, ‘Right Understanding’ may not be fully realized and may even be undeserving of the term when compared to its fuller potential; and by the time the end of the Path is reached, Right Understanding may have developed its own special properties such that it could almost go by another name. In fact, separating the two by different names may be beneficial at this point. Because Right Understanding is one aspect of wisdom (paññā), perhaps the more appropriate term for the latter type of right understanding is “wisdom”, meaning that wisdom has progressed through different phases of the Path and made it to the end point. We should now consider how each phase of the Path might have its own special features, importance, or name.

The system of the Middle Path outlines the progress of wisdom. Most ordinary people must learn by depending on the suggestions and teachings of other people. The course of training begins with some form of belief, which Buddhism calls faith or confidence (saddhā). This confidence may be based on beliefs established due to an initial satisfaction with the teachings, perhaps based on their reasonable nature, or being satisfied that the teacher meets the student’s needs. From here on, there is an increased acceptance of the teachings, and so education progresses to the point that a person sees the true logic of the teachings, which is often called right understanding. When understanding increases and gradually becomes clearer through actual practice and by comparing the teachings with actual experience, knowledge and insight become more certain. At this point, we can say that wisdom has reached the level of right knowledge or insight (sammaññā), a level beyond mere faith and beyond mere reason or logic (diṭṭhi). This is the end of the road, the
attainment of meaning – that is, the freedom of final liberation that is called samma-vimutti.\(^{49}\)

5.5.1.2. Right Thought (Sammā-Saṅkappa)

The second factor of the Eightfold Path is generally understood in the Buddhist canon to “refer to correct thought, decisions, and attitudes in specific instances, in contrast to Right Understanding, the correct fundamental interpretation of the world”.\(^{50}\)

One should make it the purpose of one’s life to follow the Noble Path. In loyalty to this purpose one should be willing to give up anything that is contrary to it, or which hinders one’s progress. One should be willing to pay any cost of comfort, or self-denial, or effort, in order to attain its goal.

_Bhikkhus, what is right thought? It is renouncing thoughts about sensuality (nekhammasaṅkappa), bearing no thoughts of hatred (abyāpādasāṅkappa) and giving up thoughts of violence (avihimśāsāṅkappa). – This is right thought._\(^{51}\)

There is another definition that is divided into two perspectives, the mundane (lokyya) and the Supramundane (lokuttara):

_Bhikkhus, what is right thought? I say that there are two kinds of right thought: one that is still tainted by intoxication, that is still meritorious and has consequences for the aggregates, and another that is most noble, without stain, Supramundane, and is a factor of the Path.

Right thought that is still tainted...renounces thought of sensuality (nekhammasaṅkappa) and bears no thought of hatred (abyāpādasāṅkappa) or violence (avihimśāsāṅkappa)...

Right thought that is most noble, without stain, and Supramundane (lokuttara) and is a factor of the Path involves reasoning, the initial application of thought (vītakka), thought (saṅkappa), the focusing of thought (appanā), the determination of thought (hyappanā), and concentrating on the predispositions of speech (vaci-saṅkhāra). Those people who have noble, untainted minds, are endowed with the Noble

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\(^{49}\) Cf. _Ibid._, pp. 198-99.

\(^{50}\) Kogen Nizuno, _Basic Buddhist Concept_, Charles S. Terry and Richard L. Gage (Tr.), p. 131.

\(^{51}\) D II 311-12; M II. 251; _Vbh._ 235, quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, _op. cit._ p. 231
Path, and are making progress along the Path...\(^52\)

5.5.1.3. Right Speech (Sammā-Vācā)

Right Speech means speaking the truth, praising where praise is due, criticizing compassionately when criticism is called for, and always stimulating harmony and love among all people by speaking in a way that is constructive and useful and that benefits both one and others.\(^53\) Speech is the connecting link between thought and action: words often obscure the Truth within one’s own mind, and often give a false impression to those that hear them. It is important therefore, that one should show restraint in one’s speech. It should always be characterized by wisdom and kindness. Undue loudness, over emphasis, and excitement should be avoided. Speech should not be prompted by prejudice, fear, anger, or infatuation, or self-interest. Careless, idle and flippant words should be avoided. All invidious distinctions, and discriminations, and dogmatic assertions and negations, should be avoided. Words that are liable to cause hard feelings, such as, repeating scandal, mean or angry words, words that deceive or cause misunderstandings, or that tend to arouse passion and lust, should never be uttered. We can see this from the definitions of these terms provided in the texts:

*Bhikkhus*, what is right speech? Right Speech is:

\(a\) musāvādā veramaṇī \hspace{1cm} \text{abstention from false speech}

\(b\) pisunāya vācāya veramaṇī \hspace{1cm} \text{abstention from libel or slander}

\(c\) pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī \hspace{1cm} \text{abstention from harsh speech}

\(d\) samphappalāpā veramaṇī \hspace{1cm} \text{abstention from vain talk/gossip}^54\)

5.5.1.4. Right Action (Sammā-Kammanta)

Right Action is refraining from killing, stealing, and immoral sexual activity. In positive terms, it means the compassionate protection of all living beings, giving to the poor, and correct sexual behaviour. Both right speech and right action are

\(^{52}\) *M. III* 73; *Vbh* 237. quoted, *Ibid* , pp 231-32.

\(^{53}\) Kogen Nizuno, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

\(^{54}\) *D. II* 311-12; *M. I* 62; *M. III.* 251; *Vbh.* 235. quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-40
consequences of right thought. One should be especially careful to keep the five precepts: not only non-killing but also should practice kindness and harmlessness toward all animate life; not steal or covet things that do not belong to one, but should practice charity and going without things oneself; not only one should not commit adultery but should practice purity of mind and sexual self-control; not only refrain from telling lie but also should practice honesty and sincerity in thought, word and deed. Not only stay away from partakes of alcoholic drinks or drugs, or anything that weakens one’s mind-control, but also should practise abstinence and self-control. And one should behave according to the general rules of propriety of society.

So, the Buddha’s reason for keeping the precepts so important was not so much for ethical reasons as for its bearing on mental development and its goal of the attainment of highest cognition and enlightenment. One cannot progress toward this high goal if one is leading a wicked or self-indulgent life. The five precepts are the bases of life, of practices of normal people, because there will be harmony in society if all people keep and follow the five precepts faithfully. We can stay together in the society by happiness. The definitions of these terms provided in the texts tell us:

_Bhikkhus, what is right action? Right action is:_

a) _paññatipātā _veramanī abstention from taking life,
b) _adinnādānā _veramanī abstention from taking what is not given,
c) _kāmesu maccācārā _veramanī abstention from sexual misconduct.

5.5.1.5. Right Livelihood (Sammā-Ājīva)

Right livelihood refers to a proper means of earning a living. One must not engage in any business or profession that involves cruelty or injustice to either men or animals. One’s life must be free from acquisitiveness, deceit or dishonesty. One must not engage in war, gambling, prostitution and so on. It must be a life of service rather than a life of profit and indulgence. The livelihood should not be persecuting one and others. For monks, who wish to devote their entire attention to attain enlightenment, it must be a Homeless Life, free from all dependence or responsibility for property,

55 Kogen Nizuno, _op. cit._, p 132
56 _M. III._ 74-75; compare with _Vbh._ 237, quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, _op. cit._, p. 240.
family or society. We can see this from the definition of these terms provided in the texts: "Bhikkhus, what is right livelihood? Right livelihood is: The Noble Disciples completely stop all improper means of livelihood and sustain themselves according to the ways of right livelihood".  

Aside from this, there is another definition that is divided according to mundane (lokiya) and supramundane (lokuttara) levels as follows:

Right livelihood at the supramundane level amounts to "abstaining from, stopping, and completely giving up any inclination towards improper livelihood. The person with a noble mind, free of intoxications (āsava), and endowed with the Noble Path is truly progressing along the Noble Path".  

5.5.1.6. Right Effort (Sammā-Vāyāma)

This factor of the Path is the first factor in the section related to samādhi or the higher mental training (adhicittasikkhā). The effort is avoiding and overcoming evil unwholesome things, and of developing and maintaining wholesome thing. For a monk, effort is sustained till he attains Nibbāna.

Early Buddhist scriptures describe four kinds of right effort designed to cultivate good and suppress evil. They are: "The effort to prevent evil from arising, the effort to abandon evil when it has arisen, the effort to produce good, and the effort to increase good when it has been produced". Only right effort has to be promoted in the realization of one’s goals. The following definition of right effort can be found in the canon.

Right effort means that, Bhikkhus in this Dhamma Vinaya you should develop right resolve (chanda), apply yourselves, be tireless, arouse your minds, and become focused, as is explained below:

1. Develop right resolve (chanda), apply yourselves, be tireless, arouse your minds, and become focused in order to (guard against) the arising of any unwholesome things (akusala dhamma) that have yet to arise;

57 D. II. 311-12, M II. 62; M III 251; Vbh 235, quoted by Ibid., p. 240
58 Ibid., p. 240.
59 Kogen Nizuno, op. cit. p. 133
2. ...in order to get rid of any demeritorious unwholesome things that have already arisen;

3. ...in order to (cultivate) wholesome things (kusala-dhamma) that have yet to arise and cause them to arise;

4. ...in order to bring about the continued prosperity and maximum development of wholesome things that have already arisen.\(^{60}\)

The Right Effort has the fourfold content namely:

i. The endeavour to discard evil that has already arisen,

ii. The endeavour to prevent the arising of unarisen evil,

iii. The endeavour to develop unarisen good, and

iv. The endeavour to promote the good, which has already arisen.\(^{61}\)

Effort is a very important part in the Noble Eightfold Path. The right effort is one of the three central factors (right understanding, right effort, and right mindfulness) around which all others revolve. And in other parts of the teachings that discuss practice, we can find effort being incorporated in one way or other.

5.5.1.7. Right Mindfulness (Sammā-Sati)

The seventh step on the path or the second factor in the samādhi section of the Eightfold Path, Right Mindfulness means constant awareness of things that are happening now and careful recollection of things that have happened in the past; it is a part of the higher mental training. This stage of the Noble Path is the culmination of the intellectual process and the connecting link with the intuitive process. Primitive Buddhist texts define four aspects of right mindfulness, with regard to body (kāyānupassanā), feelings (vedanānupassanā), thoughts (cittānupassanā), and mind object (dhammānupassanā). The usual definition of samma-sati is given in the Suttas as follows:

_Sammāsati:_ Right Mindfulness means that Bhikkhus in this Dhamma-Vinaya must contemplate into the four Satipaṭṭhānas (foundations of mindfulness), as follows:

1. Contemplates the body in the body with effort, clear comprehension

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\(^{60}\) _D. II. 311-12; M. I. 62; M. III. 251; Vbh. 235_, quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, _op. cit._, pp. 250-51.

\(^{61}\) Narada Maha Thera, _The Buddha and His Teachings_, p. 184.
(sampajañña), and mindfulness (sati), eliminating greed and grief related to the world;

2. Contemplates sensations in sensations with effort, clear comprehension, and mindfulness, eliminating greed and grief related to the world;

3. Contemplates the mind in the mind with effort, clear comprehension, and mindfulness, eliminating greed and grief related to the world;

4. Contemplates Dhammas in Dhammas with effort, clear comprehension, and mindfulness, eliminating greed and grief related to the world.\(^{62}\)

Another definition, which appears in the Abhidhamma texts, is as follows:

What is sammāsati? Sati means to reflect upon or bring to mind. Sati is the state of recollecting, the state of remembering, the state of non-dissipation, and the state of non-forgetting. Sati means the sati that is a sense-faculty, sati that has power, sammāsati, the sati that is a factor of enlightenment (bojjhanga), sati that is a factor of the Path and is linked with the Path- this is what is called sammāsati.\(^{63}\)

Sammāsati is a principle of the Dhamma known as the four foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna). The four elements of this group have the abbreviated names of:

1. Kāyānupassanā (contemplation or mindfulness of the body);
2. Vedanānupassanā (contemplation or mindfulness of sensations);
3. Cittānupassanā (contemplation or mindfulness of mind);
4. Dhammānupassanā (contemplation or mindfulness of Dhammas).

Before going deep into the meaning of sammāsati in terms of the four foundations of mindfulness, we should clarify a few general points on the subject of sati to serve as a basic foundation of our study.

5.5.1.7.1. Sati as Appamāda

Sati refers to 'non-carelessness', 'non-distraction', and 'non-fuzziness'. These negatively expressed meanings of sati point to the positive qualities of carefulness, circumspection, and clarity about one's duties and the condition of being constantly

\(^{62}\) D II 313; M. I. 62; M. III. 251; Vbh. 105, 236, quoted by Phra Prayudh Payutto, op cit. p 254

\(^{63}\) Vbh. 107, 238, quoted by Ibid., p 255
prepared to deal with situations and respond appropriately. Especially when speaking of ethical conduct, the functioning of sati is often compared to that of a gatekeeper whose job is to keep his eyes on the people passing in and out, restricting entry and exit to only the proper people. Thus, sati is of major importance to ethics. It oversees the performance of our duties, and it guards and restrains us preventing us from taking foolish pleasure and preventing evil from sneaking into the mind. To put it simply, sati reminds us to open the door to the good and close it to the bad.

Buddhadhamma emphasizes the importance of Sati at every level of ethical conduct. Mindfully conducting one’s life and one’s practice of the Dhamma is called appamāda, or conscientiousness. Appamāda is of central importance to progress in the Buddhist system of ethics, and this concept is usually defined as non-separation from Sati. Appamāda is also not allowing oneself to stumble into harmful ways, not allowing oneself to miss any opportunity for improvement, and maintaining a clear awareness of what needs to be done and what has been left undone. Appamāda involves continual attention to and appreciation of one’s duties, non-negligence, and the performance of daily tasks with sincerity and unflagging efforts aimed at improvement. In other words, appamāda constitutes Buddhist responsibility.

The importance and scope of the application of appamāda at various levels of moral practice can be gleaned from the words of the Buddha:

_Bhikkhus_, the footprints of all land animals fit within the footprint of the elephant; the elephant’s footprint is said to be supreme in terms of size. Similarly, all wholesome Dhammas having conscientiousness (appamāda) as their base fall within the bounds of conscientiousness. Conscientiousness may be said to be supreme amongst those Dhammas.

I see nothing that can bring about wholesome things that have yet to arise or can make unwholesome things that have arise fade away like conscientiousness. When a person is conscientious, then anything wholesome that has yet to arise arises, and anything unwholesome that has already arisen fades away.⁶⁴

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⁶⁴ A. I. 11, quoted by Ibid., p. 256
5.5.1.8. Right Meditation (Sammā-Samādhi)

Right Meditation, the final stage of the Path, means concentration achieved through the act of meditating. The stage of concentration has a substantial amount of material associated with it for study; it is detailed and involved not only in terms of the peculiarities and refinements of the mind but also in terms of practice and it is a point of convergence for many points of the Dhamma. In giving an account of proper concentration, the important points will be summarized first and then elaborated later.

The term ‘samādhi’ means stilling the mind or establishing single-pointedness of the mind (cittassekaggatā or ekaggatā). Or it can mean focusing the mind on a single mind-object that is, not being scattered or disturbed.

Samādhi can be divided into two levels:

1. Neighbourhood concentration (upacāra samādhi), concentration that is collecting itself, is ‘almost there’;

2. Attainment concentration (appanā samādhi), which is the highest level of concentration. Concentration is fixed and absorbed, undistracted in the various levels of absorption. This is held as the final goal in the development of samādhi.

Upacāra means to approach, denotes, as its name implies, the level of meditation that approaches the attainment level or the Jhāna (Absorption). But it is still shaky or wavering. The mind is here divorced from its Mental Hindrances of Nivaraṇa, but the five constituents of Jhāna do not yet stand out clear enough. The Ekaggatā or one-pointedness is not, strictly speaking, really one-pointed...

Appanā means attainment. This implies the level that is unshakable, beings secure and one-pointed (Ekaggatā), beyond the distractive power of Mental Hindrances. This means the five constituents, namely, Vitakka (Initiative Thought), Vicāra (Sustained Thought), Pīti (Ecstasy), Sukha (Bliss) and Ekaggatā (One-pointedness) stand out clear and prominent. All these are combined characteristic of Appanā, the advanced level of Samādhi on the lofty height called Jhāna (Absorption), of which there are eight grades altogether.65

5.5.2. The Concept of Jhāna (Absorption)

The right concentration found in the Buddhist canon, constitutes the four absorptions (jhāna). At any rate, this definition should be viewed as a model or example, because most practitioners are only able to develop insight via the very first level of concentration, which is called Vipassanā-samādhi, or samādhi between the levels of momentary concentration and neighbourhood concentration.

The Middle Path, the Perfect One has found out, which makes one both to see and to know, leads to peace, to discernment, to enlightenment and to Nibbāna. Free from pain and torture, free from groaning and suffering, this path is the Perfect Path. Therefore one finds that the unique path to attain Nibbāna, consists of the Morality (Sīla), the Concentration of Mind (Samādhi), and Wisdom or Insight (Paññā); they are all linked together and each help the cultivation of the other, and they are the three stages on the Grand Highway that leads to Nibbāna.

The human being cannot experience Nibbāna through any of the five sense organs, can be experienced through the mind-door (mano-dvāra) only. The person who is to attain enlightenment has to develop the knowledge of conditioned realities in the practice of vipassanā (insight).

The word “Insight” is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, the suffering and the impersonal and unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence... And insight is not the result of a mere intellectual understanding, but is won through direct meditative observation of one’s own bodily and mental processes.66

Jhāna is a state of serene contemplation attained by meditation from the loftiest point of view. In Jhāna the utter annihilation of the idea of ‘self’ is attained and the ecstatic union with Reality is Samādhi. It is a mystic state of spiritual rapture attained by completely eliminating all sense of reparative actuality by continuously meditating on unifying Reality. Samādhi is superior to meditation inasmuch as the three factors of meditating—the mind of the individual, the object of meditation, and the relationship

between these two—are transcended. *Sammā Samādhi* forms a vital element of *Jhāna*.

*Jhāna* is manifested in four emotional states: Firstly, a state of pure joy and gladness the outcome of a life of seclusion given to reflection and investigation. Secondly, a state of great elation and unruffled calm, thirdly, a state of total absence of all passion and prejudice, and lastly, of complete self-possession and absolute tranquillity. It noted that *Jhāna* as practised by *Bhikkhu* in Buddhism is not a method of losing one’s self-consciousness in all-consciousness, but the subjective method of developing one’s own consciousness in a particular direction. It is thus a self-directed purposive eradication of the sense of one’s own detached self with a view to carry on a contemplative investigating of all things dispassionately. In other words, it is an earnest and strenuous endeavour to train one’s mind and expand one’s imagination to such a pitch that one eventually comes into possession of the complete knowledge of the right and fitting place of each living coloured piece in the grand animated mosaic of nature-knowledge which leads to the adjustment of one’s thoughts and ideals, intents and actions in such a way as to harmonize completely with that grand mosaic scheme of nature.

Though *Jhāna* unaided contains vast possibilities within itself, its power is increased infinitely when practised with *Paññā* or divine intuition. When these two go hand in hand, then and only then the mind is completely freed not only from worldly disquietude of all kinds but also from *atmamoha*, self-love, which is the mother of every species of egoism.

When a person has realized the characteristics of *nāma* and *rūpa* more and more clearly, he experiences their arising and falling away. The practice of concentration on breathing (*anāpānasati*) is one of the well-known exercises, connected with the body, and it is for mental development. There are several other ways of developing attentiveness in relation to the body-as modes of meditation.

Meditation, in the Buddhist sense of the word, is not mere desultory reflection, but a severe exercise in attention, discipline of will and mind, and concentration of thought. The practice of meditation based on morality and leading to the Higher
Wisdom, is essential to the attainment of Nibbāna.67

The wisdom (pañña) has been developed to a high degree that it can realize the nāma and rūpa, which present them through the six doors,68 are anicca (impermanent), dukkha (suffering), and anattā (no self). In the process in which enlightenment is attained, the mano-dvāravajjana-citta (mind-door-adverting-consciousness) takes, as its object, one of the three characteristics of reality: Anicca, itself, at that moment, is seen either as anicca, or as dukkha or as anattā.

5.6. THE ROLE OF NĀMA-RŪPA IN THE ATTAINMENT NIBBĀNA

No term in Buddhism has evoked such controversy among its most renowned exponents as Nibbāna, and no two Buddhologists are agreed upon the true meaning and exact connotation of that thrice-blasted state. The human being, who has attained these two stages of Nibbāna, is called ‘Arahant’. When the Buddha or Arahant entered anupādisesa nibbāna, we call that state as Parmibbāna (death).

The Buddha and Arahants have attained Absolute Truth at the level of sa-upādisesa nibbāna. Nāma-rūpa (five aggregates) remaining, they can act, speak, and think only good things, but they are not affected by the result of that action. That action is akiriyā (not practical), because their minds are beyond goodness and evil, right and wrong, existence and non-existence of cause and effect. In the Dīgha Nikāya: Aggañña Sutta (On knowledge of Beginnings) has explained the meaning of the body of the One who has attained enlightenment, thus:

...A Khattiya, who is restrained in body, speech, and thought, and who has developed the seven requisites of enlightenment, will attain to Parmibbāna in this very life... whoever of these castes, as a monk, becomes an Arahant who has destroyed the corruptions, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, attained to the highest goal, completely destroyed the fetter of becoming, and become liberated by the highest insight, he is declared to be chief among

67 Eugene Watson Burlingame (Tr.), op. cit., 1-2, 20
them in accordance with *Dhamma*, and not otherwise.\(^6^9\)

Though they can experience *dukkha* (suffering) physically, they cannot escape from action of the past; action, good or evil, of the past must be given the result in the present with everybody. If *kamma* cannot give the result, that *kamma* becomes *ahosi-kamma* (an act or thought whose *kamma* has no longer any potential force). The *kamma* of the past can give the result in the present life to one who has attained Arahathood. For example,

The thieves were torn the great saint Moggallāna in pieces, and his bones were pounded until they were as small as grains of rice; such a miserable death of such a great saint naturally raised doubts among his disciples, and these were explained by Buddha, who said that this was due to the crime of parricide, which Moggallāna had committed in some previous birth; even though he had attained sainthood in that life, he could not escape suffering the effect of his misdeeds, which were on the point of bearing fruit. This would naturally imply the view that sainthood does not necessarily mean destruction of the body, but that even after the attainment of sainthood the body may continue to exist of the suffering of the effects of such actions as are on the point of bearing fruit.\(^7^0\)

The *Arahant* who gets the result from his action of the past does not feel restless from that result. His mind and body are merely elements, which are associated with the four elements and the five aggregates, are the same as all people. But *Rāga* (greed), *Dosa* (hatred), and *Moha* (delusion), goodness or evil cannot give the result to his mind and body. Therefore when the person has attained *Nibbāna*, the four elements and the five aggregates remaining, it is called ‘*Sa-upādisesa Nibbāna*’. When the personas attained final *Nibbāna* (without remainder) at death, the four elements and the five aggregates had blown; they are called ‘*Anupādisesa Nibbāna*’. The *Nibbāna* is to be experienced by the wise in his own inner realm.

*Nibbāna* is, in fact, the great prize, which He holds up before the eyes of His disciples, every one of who is urged to acquire it. *Nibbāna* means without desire, freedom from desire, or the extinguishments of all desires of life. To understand the

\(^{6^9}\) Maurice Walshe (Tr.), *D.* 415.

\(^{7^0}\) Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* Vol. II, p. 248
import and etymological significance of the term we must call to mind the simile of fire and flame so constantly made use of by Buddha himself and so frequently found in the Buddhist canon.

The whole world is in flames. All things, O Bhikkhus, are on fire. The eye is on fire, forms are on fire, eye-consciousness is on fire, and so are the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the sense of the touch. The mind, too, is on fire, thoughts are on fire, and mind-consciousness and impressions received by the mind and the sensations-pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral—that arise from those impressions are all likewise on fire.

And with what are they on fire? I say with the fire of raga, dosa, and moha (lust, hatred, and illusion) and of birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair.

When the true disciple realizes this fact of existence, he ceases to attach any value to the eye, forms, eye-consciousness, to impressions received by the eye and for sensations arising therein; and to the ear, the nose, the tongue, and to the sense of touch, and to the mind and mind-consciousness, impressions and sensations. And so he is divested of tanhā (craving), and thereby he is freed from attachment and is aware that he is freed, and he knows that Becoming is exhausted, that he has lived the pure life, that he has done what it behoved him to do, and that he has put off mortality for ever and thereby attained naturally and inevitably to the state of Arahatta and of Nibbānā.71

5.7. THE RELATION BETWEEN MIND AND BODY IN NIBBĀNA EXISTENT IN THE SUTTA PIṬAKA

In the Sutta, the Buddha and His disciples have explained about Nibbāna, how to attain it, the persons who have attained Nibbāna, and Being of Nibbāna. And He has showed the way of attaining Nibbāna, and when it can be attained, what is arising in his mind and body. Hence, the purpose is to explain about the mind and body of a person, who has already enlightened and how he has attained Nibbāna.

5.7.1. The Concept of Mind and Body in Nibbāna in the Dīgha Nikāya

In the Dīgha Nikāya, the Buddha had explained the relation between mind and body for monks and His other disciples. He addressed to happiness of one who has attained Nibbāna as follows:

When a monk attains the first jhāna to the fourth jhāna, he can proclaim to have attained highest Nibbāna here and now. Aspects of jhāna are four levels, such as:

When a monk enters and abides in the first jhāna, thinking and pondering, and delight and happiness born of detachment accompany him.

When a monk enters and abides in the second jhāna, with inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he is free from thinking and pondering and is born of concentration, accompanied by delight and joy.

When a monk enters and abides in the third jhāna, he is happy to dwell with equanimity and mindfulness.

When a monk enters and abides in the fourth jhāna, the state beyond pleasure and pain, purified by equanimity and mindfulness, he can proclaim to have attained highest Nibbāna here and now.

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are proclaimers of Nibbāna Here and Now, and who proclaim Nibbāna here and now for an existent being in five ways...Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin declares and holds the view: “In as far as this self, being furnished and endowed with the fivefold sense-pleasures, indulges in them, then that is when the self realises the highest Nibbāna here and now...When this self, detached from sense-desires, detached from unwholesome states, enters and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thinking and pondering, and the delight and happiness born of detachment, that is when the self realises the highest Nibbāna here and now”.”

“When the self by subsiding of thinking and pondering enters and abides in the second jhāna, with inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, which is free from thinking and pondering and is born of concentration, and accompanied by delight and joy, that is when the self realises the highest Nibbāna here and now”.

72 D 85
73 Ibid., 86.
"When the self, with the waning of delight, dwells in equanimity, mindful and clearly aware, experiencing in his own body that joy of which the Noble Ones say: ‘Happy dwells one who has equanimity and mindfulness’, and so enters and abides in the third jhāna,

The mind contains the idea of joy, and that state is considered gross. But when, with the abandonment of pleasure and pain, with the disappearance of previous joy and grief, one enters and abides in a state beyond pleasure and pain in the fourth jhāna, which is purified by equanimity and mindfulness,..."

The Buddha has said, with Ānanda, that in so far as a monk having known that there are really seven stations of consciousness and two spheres, their origin and cessation, their attraction and peril, is freed without attachment, that monk is called one who is liberated by wisdom. There are eight types of liberation. They are:

“(1) Possessing form, one sees forms. That is the first liberation.

(2) Not perceiving material forms in oneself, one sees them outside. That is the second liberation.

(3) Thinking: ‘It is beautiful’ one becomes intent on it. That is the third.

(4) By completely transcending all perception of matter, by the vanishing of the perception of sense-reactions and by non-attention to the perception of variety, thinking: ‘Space is infinite’, one enters and abides in the Sphere of Infinite Space. That is the fourth.

(5) By transcending the Sphere of Infinite Space, thinking: ‘Consciousness is infinite’, one enters and abides in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. That is the fifth.

(6) By transcending the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, thinking: ‘There is no thing’, one enters and abides in the Sphere of No-Thingness. That is the sixth.

(7) By transcending the Sphere of No-Thingness, one reaches and abides in the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception. That is the seventh.

(8) By transcending the Sphere of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-perception one enters and abides in the Cessation of Perception and Feeling. That is the eighth liberation”.

When One attains these eight levels of liberation in the ascending order, in reverse order, and in forward-and-reverse order, entering them and emerging from

74 Ibid., 86
75 Ibid., 229-30.
them for as long as he wishes, and has gained by his own super-knowledge here and now both the destruction of the corruptions and the uncorrupted liberation by heart and liberation by wisdom, these both ways called ‘both-ways-liberated’, and there is no other way more excellent or perfect than this way.

The Buddha explained the four kinds of life devoted to pleasure, which are entirely conducive to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to tranquillity, to realisation, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna to Cunda, who has been His follower as follows:

“Firstly, a monk, detached from all sense-desires, detached from unwholesome mental states, enters and remains in the first jhāna, which is with thinking and pondering, born of detachment, filled with delight and happiness. And with the subsiding of thinking and pondering, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters and remains in the second jhāna, which is without thinking and pondering, born of concentration, filled with delight and happiness. Again, with the fading of delight, remaining imperturbable, mindful and clearly aware, he experiences in himself that joy of which the Noble Ones say: “Happy is he who dwells with equanimity and mindfulness”, he enters and remains in the third jhāna. Again, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the disappearance of former gladness and sadness, he enters and remains in the fourth jhāna, which is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness”.  

5.7.2. The Concept of Mind and Body in Nibbāna in the Majjhima Nikāya

In Majjhima Nikāya also Buddha and His disciples had described the relation between mind and body, both before and after the attainment of Nibbāna. Buddhism holds that final extinction of ignorance is the way of escape from the wheel of life, but the escape is not reached, and of course in the Buddhist system, could not be reached in a union with God, which is to be attained only in an after-life. Buddhism holds that the end of life is attained in Nibbāna, that is, ‘going out, or extinction’. But Nibbāna really means the higher life of a man who has risen above himself.

Therefore mind and body play a very important role in attaining Nibbāna. When the human being is able to control his mind and destroy the Ten Saṁyojanas (fetters),

76 Ibid., 434.
he enters into Nibbāna. Hence, the Buddha and His disciples while explaining the relation of mind and body in Nibbāna of this Sutta in the Saṁyutta Nikāya, had interpreted the purpose, as follows:

When a monk knows that greed and ill-will are evils, and for getting rid of them, follows the Middle way or Eightfold Path only, he will attain Nibbāna.

“…Your reverences, greed is evil and ill-will is evil; for getting rid of greed and for getting rid of ill-will there is the Middle Course which, making for vision, making for knowledge, conduces to tranquillity, to super-knowledge, to awakening, to Nibbāna…It is this ariyan Eightfold Way itself, that is to say, perfect view, perfect thought, perfect speech, perfect action, perfect mode of livelihood, perfect exertion, perfect mindfulness, perfect concentration. It is this, your reverences, that is the Middle Course, which, making for vision, making for knowledge, conduces…to Nibbāna”.

“Monks, if a monk should wish: ‘By the total destruction of the five fetters that bind one to the lower world, may I be of spontaneous uprising, one who has utterly attained to Nibbāna there, not liable to return from that world, he should be one who fulfils the moral habits…a cultivator of empty places’.

Nibbāna is not a place for one who is concerned with the five aggregates and the ten fetters. But when the five aggregates are extinguished and the ten fetters destroyed, one enters into Anupādīsesa Nibbāna Dhātu, as is mentioned above.

When a monk is acquiring equanimity, he should not rejoice in equanimity, he does not approve or cleave to it. Because whenever consciousness is dependent on it, by grasping after it, he cannot attain final Nibbāna. If his consciousness is not dependent on it, be not grasping after it, he can attain final Nibbāna, as mentioned below:

“… If a monk is here faring along thus and thinks: ‘Had it not been it would not be mine; if it be not it will not be mine; I am getting rid of what is, of what has come to be’ –he is thus acquiring equanimity. He rejoices in this equanimity, approves of it and cleaves to it, consciousness is dependent on it, grasping after it. A monk who has grasping… does not attain-final Nibbāna.

77 M. 1. 20.
78 Ibid. 1 43.
...Ānanda, if a monk is here fariing along thus and thinks: 'Had it not been it would not be mine; if it be not it will not be mine; I am getting rid of what is, of what has come to be'—he is thus acquiring equanimity. He does not rejoice in that equanimity does not approve of it or cleave to it. Not rejoicing in that equanimity, not approving of it or cleaving to it, consciousness is not dependent on it, not grasping after it. A monk who is without grasping, Ānanda, attains final Nibbāna”.

Vacchagotta, a follower of the Buddha, asks the Buddha that whether the Tathāgata exists, does not exist, both exists and does not exist, or neither exists nor does not exist after death. The Buddha tells Vacchagotta that you have no view on these questions, because these questions are of no use for happiness in this world, for next birth, for heaven, and for Nibbāna. So, He asks Vacchagotta whether a fire goes to the east, west, north or south when it is extinguished. Vacchagotta replies that this question does not apply, since the fire simply goes out (Nibbāna) when it has exhausted its fuel. Then the Buddha says:

“Even so, Vaccha, that material shape by which one recognizing the Tathāgata might recognize him—that material shape has been got rid of by the Tathāgata, cut off at the root, made like a palm-tree stump that can come to no further existence and is not liable to arise again in the future...”

5.7.3. The Concept of Mind and Body in Nibbāna in the Saṁyutta Nikāya

Nibbāna is the ultimate reality in Buddhism, when Ariyapuggala (Noble One) attained Nibbāna, the kilesa (defilement) could not be admitted into his mind, nor results of action, both goodness and sin, could be received healthy and coolly by his body and so on. That body has no volitional activities, as is explained below:

...If ye do not ground on this shore or that shore, if ye sink not in mid-stream, if ye stick not fast on a shoal, if ye fall not into hands human or non-human, if ye be not caught in a whirlpool, if ye rot not inwardly, -then, brethren, ye shall float down to Nibbāna. Ye shall slide down to Nibbāna, ye shall tend towards Nibbāna. Because,

79 Ibid., III. 50.
80 Ibid., II. 166.
brethren, perfect view floats, slides, tends towards Nibbāna.\footnote{S IV. 113-14}

Venerable Sāriputta was staying at Nālaka Village. Then, his nephew the wanderer, Rose-apple-cater, came to visit him, and asked him about Nibbāna. Venerable Sāriputta explained to him as follows:

The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of illusion...is called Nibbāna.

It is this Ariyan Eightfold Path,...for the realization of Nibbāna, to wit, right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. Such...is this path, this approach to the realization of Nibbāna.\footnote{Ibid. IV. 170.}

Buddha answers the question of the brahmin Unnābha who comes to visit the Exalted One at Sāvatthi as follows:

‘...Master Gotama, what is the resort of mind?’
‘Mindfulness, brahmin, is the resort of mind’.
‘Then, master Gotama, what is the resort of mindfulness?’
‘Release, brahmin, is the resort of mindfulness’.
‘What, then, master Gotama, is the resort of release?’
‘Nibbāna, brahmin, is the resort of release’.
‘...Master Gotama, what is the resort of Nibbāna?’

‘The question goes too far, brahmin. That question is beyond the compass of an answer. The aim of living the holy life, brahmin, is to plunge into Nibbāna. It has Nibbāna for its goal, Nibbāna for its ending.’\footnote{Ibid. V. 193.}

5.7.4. The Concept of Mind and Body in Nibbāna in the Khuddaka Nikāya

Khuddaka Nikāya (Smaller Collection or the Minor Anthologies of the Pāli Canon) is the last scripture of the Suttanta Piṭaka, which consists of 15 books. In this Khuddaka Nikāya, most books narrate stories of the Buddha and His followers, methods of good action, and main system of explanation through reasoning, namely,
Milinda Pañha (King Milinda’s question) and so on.

Nibbāna is the Ultimate Goal of Buddhism; this the Buddha and His followers had explained in Khuddaka Nikāya also. What is the relation between mind and body in one yet to attain Nibbāna or Arahant (Noble One’s)? The Buddha has explained the method of destroying the wall of bondage and to unresisting enlightenment Nibbāna, as follows:

Bhikkhus, if there is lust, if there is relish, if there is craving, for physical nutriment, their consciousness finds a steadying-point and develops. Wherever consciousness finds a steadying and develops, there is the finding of a footing for name-and-form. Wherever there is the finding of a footing for name-and-form, there is maturing of determinations. Wherever there is maturing of determinations, there renewed being is made to occur in the future. Wherever renewed being is made to occur in the future, there is future birth, ageing and death. Wherever here is future birth, ageing and death, that is accompanied by sorrow, Bhikkhus, accompanied by trouble, accompanied by despair, I say. If there is lust...for contact,...despair. If there is lust...for mind-choice,...despair. If there is lust...for consciousness,...despair.

Bhikkhus, if there is no lust, if there is no relish, if there is no raving, for physical nutriment, their consciousness does not find a steadying-point or develop. Wherever consciousness does not find a steadying-point or develop, there is no finding of a footing for name-and-form. Wherever there is no finding of a footing for name-and-form, there is no maturing of determinations. Wherever there is no maturing of determinations, there no renewal of being is made to occur in the future. Wherever no renewal of being is made to occur in the future, there is no future birth, ageing and death, that is sorrowless, Bhikkhus, untroubled and free from despair, I say. If there is no lust...for contact,...free from despair. If there is no lust...for mind-choice, ...free from despair. If there is no lust...for consciousness, free from despair.84

The state of Nibbāna is very difficult to explain to the ordinary people, like us, and one cannot find the state of Nibbāna, if one cannot destroy ten fetters and three unwholesome roots (Akusala-mūla), that is,

84 Kh. N 85-86.
I. 
1. Lobha: greed,
2. Dosa: hatred,

So, the Exalted One pointed out to the monks that, it is like the pillar of smoke and the mass of darkness and said to them, as follow:

Monks, that is Māra (the Tempter), searching for the consciousness of the goodly youth Godhika. Thinks he, where has the consciousness of the goodly youth Godhika fixed itself? But, monks, the consciousness of the goodly youth Godhika has not fixed itself. For, monks, the goodly youth Godhika has passed into Nibbāna". Māra, unable to find the place where the consciousness of the Elder had fixed itself, assumed the form of a prince...

The monk Gothika comes to kill himself after persistently struggling, but failing, to attain Nibbāna. The Buddha, immediately knowing of his suicide, nevertheless says that he had 'attained Nibbāna, that is, Godhika had attained this at the moment of his death. The Buddha, then, goes with some monks to where Godhika’s body is and where a smoke is seen going in every direction.

This is referred to unsupported discernment as existing beyond the death of an Arahant, with such a form of discernment being tantamount to the attainment of Nibbāna.

THE RELATION BETWEEN MIND AND BODY IN NIRVĀṇA ACCORDING TO MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate purpose of all the schools of Hinayāna is the attainment of Nibbāna (Liberation). But these schools emphasize on liberation by the individual himself. And all the Hinayāna schools have accepted that Nibbāna is negative, that is, extinction of miseries and ego and only for the individual. The goal of these schools is Arahathood or the state of the ideal saint who obtains personal salvation.

The Mahāyāna does not accept this idea because the attainment of Nirvāṇa for

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85 Eugene Watson Burlingame, op. cit., 3-12, p. 91.
the individual himself is a revolt against selfishness and narrow-mindedness. So, all Bodhisattvas should not hurry to attain Nirvāṇa. First of all, they must help the people in this Samsāraracakka (The cycle of rebirth), then, should strive to attain Nirvāṇa. And the Mahāyānists hope to attain Buddhahood, also unlike the Hīnayānists who believe in attaining Arahathood only.

5.8. THE NATURE AND MEANING OF NIRVĀṆA IN THE MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM

The conception of Nirvāṇa is the greatest original contribution of Indian philosophy to the world thought. This is the greatest way shown by Indian sages to the suffering mankind to become free from all kinds of miseries, passions, and ignorance realizing one’s own real nature or self. The systems of Indian philosophy considered Mokṣa as the highest value, the sumnum bonum of human life, which has the same meaning of Nirvāṇa. “The word ‘Nirvāṇa’ is derived from the root ‘nir’ meaning absence and ‘vāta’ that stands for wind; and the suffix ‘ta’ is changed into ‘na’. The expression ‘to blow out’ instantly suggests blowing out of the fire”.

The word ‘Nirvāṇa’ is not, as has been understood, a state of ‘nothingness’, or the end of escape. It is not extinction, not annihilation, not ascending to some eternal heaven. It is a real, positive state of fulfilment, and this is done not blindly and egoistically. According to Dorothy C. Donath, “Nirvāṇa is not a state but a state of consciousness of consciousness of enlightenment from all ignorance, greed, selfishness, dualistic thinking, and belief in an eternally existing ego; of liberation from materialistic ideas, thoughts beliefs, in the absolute reality of material things”.

K. Venkata Ramanan has explained the meaning of Nirvāṇa in Nāgārjuna’s Philosophy that “Nirvāṇa is the unborn, unextinct dharma; it is the ultimate reality, the supreme end. It is not itself anything born. In truth all things are in their ultimate nature, the Nirvāṇa itself, …all things themselves are the anutpādakoṭi (Supreme)”.

86 Harcharan Singh Sobti, Nibbāna in Early Buddhism Based on Pāli Sources From 6th B.C To 5th A.D., p. 18
87 Dorothy C. Donath, Buddhism for the West: Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, p 23.
88 K. Venkata Ramanan, Nāgārjuna’s Philosophy, p. 263.
Dr. D.T. Suzuki mentions four kinds of *Nirvāṇa*. They are:

1. The *Nirvāṇa*, which is attained when the self-nature of all things is seen as non-entity;
2. The *Nirvāṇa*, which is attained when varieties of individual marks characterizing all things are seen as non-entities
3. The *Nirvāṇa*, which is attained when there is the recognition of the non-existence of a being endowed with its own specific attributes; and
4. The *Nirvāṇa*, which is attained when their takes place the severance of the bondage conditioning the continuation of individuality and generality of the *Skandhas*.

*Nirvāṇa* literally means ‘extinction’ or dissolution of the five *Skandhas* (aggregate) and it is tantamount to the annihilation of the material existence and of all the passions. *Nirvāṇa* is purely a state of mind obtainable anywhere and any time, and can be achieved while still in the flesh. As life or the corporate personality is only formed as the result of desire and ignorance about the past, when the *Arahants* attains *Nirvāṇa*, and dies, no new personality is formed, and certainly, only personality as such is wiped out of existence.

So, *Nirvāṇa* is the attainment to ‘Śūnyatā’, that is, a state of emptiness or voidness in which all the sufferings connected with all states of existences are entirely absent. Hence describing the nature of *Nirvāṇa* Buddhism differs from the other schools of Indian thought, but in the ultimate point of view, there is not much difference between them. Describing the nature of *Nirvāṇa*, even Buddhist schools given different meanings.

The symbolical description or synonym of *Nirvāṇa* has to be spoken in abstractions and using concrete images instead. From this standpoint, *Nirvāṇa* is “(i) the cool cave, (ii) the island in the floods, (iii) the further shore, (iv) the holy city, (v) the refuge, (vi) the shelter, (vii) the asylum.”

Dr. Yajneshwar S. Shastri has explained the meaning of *Nirvāṇa* from the differing views between *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism as follows:

*Hinayānists* believed that *Nirvāṇa* is something existent, full of peace and beyond misery. It can be attained realizing *pudgala-nairāmya*

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(realizing self or ego to be non-existent which is the real cause of pain and passion). Removing the Kleśāvaraṇa is enough for attaining the Nirvāṇa. But Mahāyānists hold that Nirvāṇa is not something to be achieved; it is realizing the true nature of things. It is indescribable and beyond categories of intellect. Therefore, it cannot be said either existent or non-existent. Simply realizing the pudgalaṇairātmya is not enough for realizing the Nirvāṇa but realizing the Dharmaṇairātmya is also essential. Removing both the kleśāvaraṇa and Jñeyāvaraṇa, one can know the real nature of Nirvāṇa.\(^\text{91}\)

The Yogācāra School believes that saṁsāra is not real, because it is a reflection of citta or vijñāna; only citta or vijñāna is real. Hence the difference between the nature of Śūnyavāda and Cittamātra, as quoted in the words of Benoytosh Bhattacharya is:

The Mādhyamika theory of nirvāṇa is śūnya or a state about which neither existence nor non-existence nor a combination of the two, nor a negation of the two can be predicated. But in Yogācāra, which seems to be only a later development of the original Śūnyavāda, the element of vijñāna, a positive element, is present in addition to śūnya or nairātmya (egolessness). The Bodhi mind is a chain of vijñāna, which is changing every moment, the vijñāna of the previous moment giving rise to the vijñāna of the next, with the same memory, quality, conformation, etc. And this process goes on until the vijñāna attains either omniscience or extinction in nirvāṇa by eliminating all impurities.\(^\text{92}\)

Dr. Yajneshwar S. Shastri says that the conception of Nirvāṇa of Vijnānavādins is slightly different from that of Mādhyamikas. They are: “For Mādhyamika Absolute is Śūnya, means indescribable. So, Nirvāṇa is also Śūnya. For Vijnānavādins, ultimate reality is pure consciousness. So Nirvāṇa is also a state of pure consciousness (citta) where it is free from the entire subject – object duality”.\(^\text{93}\)

5.8.1. Two Status of Nirvāṇa

The word ‘Nirvāṇa’ means ‘extinguished’ and ‘tranquil’, which is both Negative and Positive, as is described in Buddhist literature.

\(^{91}\) Dr. Yajneshwar S. Shastri, MASVB., pp. 92-93.
\(^{92}\) Doboom Tulku, Mind Only School and Buddhist Logic, pp. 52-53
\(^{93}\) Dr. Yajneshwar S. Shastri, op cit., p 93
Negative: the negative description is the most common in Buddhism both in Hinayana and Mahayana. (1) deathless (amrita), (2) unchanging, (3) imperishable (acyuta), (4) without end (ananta), (5) non-production, (6) extinction of birth, (7) unborn, (8) not liable to dissolution (apalokita), (9) uncreated (abhuta), (10) free from disease, (11) unaging, (12) freedom from transmigration (13) anutaram (utmost), (14) cessation of pain (duhkha-nirodha), (15) final release (apavarga).

Positive: Nirvana is

1. peace (sama or upasama); the following verse of Mahaparinirvana-sutra bring out this idea very clearly:

   Aniccà vata sankharà uppadavayadhanno
   Uppajjitaà nirujjhanti tesai viìpasamo sukho

   Impermanent, indeed, are all conditioned things. It is their very nature to come into being and then to cease. Having been produced, they are stopped. Their cessation brings peace and ease.

   Sama or upasama connotes extinction of craving, cessation of suffering and a state of calm.

2. bliss - Nibbana-param-sukham (Nirvana is the supreme bliss).

3. sambhodhi or prajna (transcendental wisdom).

4. jhana (illumination) or viñana (pure, radiant consciousness).

5. security (ksama).94

Nagarjuna believes that Nirvana is not positive and not negative, not any kind of existence. According to Nagarjuna, "if it were positive, it would be subject to decay and death. Everything existing is invariably subject to decay and death. It would then not be Nirvana. That which is free from decay and death is not positive, like sky flower, which is free from decay and death".95

The Nirvana is also not something negative. If Nirvana is not positive, it is also not negative or non-existence. "If Nirvana is taken as the absence or cessation of klesas and the individual existences, then it would be impermanent like them. Impermanence itself

94 Jaideva Sing, An Introduction to Madhyamika Philosophy, p. 25.
95 R.S. Misra, Studies in Philosophy and Religion, p.189
constitutes the absence of *kleśas*, individual existences etc., and not anything else. In that case impermanence itself will be taken as *Nirvāṇa*”. But every body cannot desire that, as one can attain *mokṣa* without any effort. If *Nirvāṇa* were negative or cessation of existence, then it cannot be called independent and unconditioned.

Everything must have a cause and a condition, but *Nirvāṇa*, in which birth and death have ceased, is uncaused and unconditioned and then not produced (*apravṛtti*). Existence or non – existence cannot be predicated so *Nirvāṇa* is neither existence nor non- existence.

The difference between the *Yogācārins* and the *Mādhyamikas* in attempting to find a relation between the absolute and the individual, as they asserted that there exists only *citta* (*cittamātra*) or *Vijñāna* (*Vijñānamātra*), is as follows: “This *citta* or *Vijñāna*, better known as Ālaya *Vijñāna* (storehouse of consciousness, the substratum of *Samsāra*), though originally pure, becomes polluted by delusions and dichotomises itself into ‘me’ and ‘not-me’, subject and object, former becoming mind (*manas*) and the latter the external world. So, according to the *Yogācārins*, *Nirvāṇa* consists in the ceasing of the mind to dichotomise and in realizing that there exists only *citta* and that the phenomenal world is only a delusion of the *citta*”.

According to the *Punḍarīka*, “the real *Nirvāṇa* is that state, in which one sees things without any differentiation or dichotomy, and for the description of which all the expressions that can be used by man, relative as they are, are inadequate”.

5.8.2. Two Aspects of *Nirvāṇa*

*Nirvāṇa* has two aspects:

1. The *Sopādhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa* – The *Nirvāṇa* with a remainder of aggregates is the mere abandonment of the afflictions.

2. The *Nirupādhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa* – The *Nirvāṇa* without a remainder is the cutting of the continuum of all the aggregates.

The mode of assertion and the mode of objection are explained below:

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96 Ibid., p. 190.
97 Nalinaksha Dutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-46.
98 Ibid., p. 189.
1. The *Sopadhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa* (*Nirvāṇa* has some residue): This is a state of enlightenment, which can be attained by Buddhists in their lifetime; but the physical body and the mental components associated with it, comprising of a residuum of conditioned existence (caused by the passions and actions of prior lives) would continue until physical death.

2. The *Nirūpadhiśeṣa Nirvāṇa* (*Nirvāṇa* has no residue): The *Arahant* including Buddha represented an unconditioned state eternally liberated from the conditioned, mundane world of sentient being; his groups of existents had extinguished because the root cause of future conditioned existence had been utterly removed, released from the pain of birth and death as well as from the curse of passion and sin, pass into a state permanently free from rebirth.\(^\text{99}\)

The *Yogācāra* perspective also sees *Nirvāṇa* as an object transcending the state of discernment. As stated by the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, "*Nirvāṇa is the Ālayavijñāna where revulsion takes place by self-realization".\(^\text{100}\) So, the getting rid of the discriminating conceptional discernment is said to be *Nirvāṇa*, when conception discernment is got rid of, the seven discernment are also got rid of. Here, the Ālayavijñāna is the underlying ‘store-discernment’ which projects out of itself the other forms of discernment (*Vijñānas*), which appears to be aware of objects.

5.8.3. *Nirvāṇa and Dharmakāya*

The *Mahāyāna* Buddhism has given definite statements regarding the meaning of *Nirvāṇa* and tried to give each of them some special, distinctive character. When it is used in the meaning of metaphysical sense, it becomes synonymous with *tathatā* (suchness) or with the *Dharmakāya*.

*Dharmakāya*. One of the meanings of the world ‘*Dharma*’ is ‘teaching’. Originally the term ‘*Dharmakāya*’ probably referred simply to the body or corpus of teachings of the Buddha... at this early stage there is no question of the survival of the Buddha as a

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\(^\text{100}\) Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *LSMT*, p. 55
person in an apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa, but only the view that the Buddha can still be contacted — in a purely figurative sense — in the body or corpus of teachings that he left behind.\textsuperscript{101}

The Dharmakāya of the Buddha, not detached from the storage of passions, is called "Tathāgata Garbha" (The Essence of Buddhahood). In Buddhism, passion or desire of sin (kleśa) is generally used in contrast to intelligence or Bodhi or Nirvāṇa. As the latter, religiously considered, represents a particular manifestation in the human mind of the Dharmakāya, so the former is a reflection of universal ignorance in the microcosm. According to Buddhism, "the human soul in which, intelligence and desire are merged, should be regarded as an individuation of the Tathāgata Garbha. And it is in this capacity that the Garbha (womb) is called Ālayavijñāna".\textsuperscript{102}

Absolute Nirvāṇa, as a synonym of the Dharmakāya. It is eternally immaculate in its essence and constitutes the truth and reality of all existences. Thought it manifests itself in the world of defilement and relativity, its essence forever remains undefiled. While it embraces in itself innumerable incomprehensible spiritual virtues, it is absolutely simple and immortal; its perfect tranquillity may be likened unto space in which every conceivable motion is possible, but which remains in itself the same. It is universally present in all beings whether animate or inanimate and makes their existence real.\textsuperscript{103}

Therefore Nirvāṇa is the law of the universe; it is the same as Dharmakāya of the Buddha. Nirvāṇa is realizing Dharmakāya or Dharmadhātu (The Realm of the Existential – elements). For Vijñānavādins every being is potentially a Buddha and is, in essence, the same as Dharmadhātu. It means Nirvāṇa is nothing but realisation of this potentiality. Nirvāṇa is not only a subjective state of enlightenment but also an objective power through whose operation this beatific state becomes attainable. It does not simply mean a total absorption in the Absolute or of emancipation from earthly desires in lifetime as exemplified in the life of the Arahants. "Mahāyānists perceive in Nirvāṇa not only this, but also its identity with the Dharmakāya, or Suchness, and

\textsuperscript{101} Thomas E. Wood, \textit{Mind Only: A Philosophical and Doctrinal Analysis of the Vijñānavāda}, pp 75-76.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid}., p. 343.
recognise its universal spiritual presence in all sentient beings."  

Expanding upon this, the scripture affirms that there can be only one ultimate ‘Nirvāṇa realm’ that is synonymous with the Dharmakāya (Absolute Body) of the Tathāgata, and the definition given to these later effects a direct, if not coterminous equivalence with the Tathāgata-embryo (Tathāgatagarbha):

The Dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is named ‘cessation of suffering’, and it is beginningless, uncreate, unborn, undying, free from death; permanent, steadfast, calm, eternal; intrinsically pure, free from all the defilement store; and accompanied by Buddha natures more numerous than the sands of the Ganges, which are non discrete, knowing as liberated, and inconceivable. This Dharmakāya of the Tathāgata when not free from the store of defilement is referred to as the Tathāgatagarbha.  

5.8.4. Nirvāṇa and Saṁsāra

The thinkers of Hinayāna School accepted the Buddha’s two orders of experience that are, (i) the apparent universe of transience, non-substantiality and sorrow (Saṁsāra), and (ii) the transcendent order of dispassion or non-duality (Nirvāṇa). The distinction between the two orders is not a matter for discussion, but for experience only. There is no metaphysics or ultimate notions to be fostered between the two. In the Mahāvagga, the Buddha is deified Saṁsāra as “an enemy of rebirth, because of his undivided attention focussed on showing us the way to get out of Saṁsāra”.  

The thinkers of the Mahāyāna School granted the two orders, but considered the transcendent as the ground of the apparent. On the assumption of a non-dual transcendent basis for the apparent differences, they eliminated the distinction between the two apparent orders.  

The definition of Nirvāṇa attributed to the Buddha-Nirvāṇa, which is the

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104 Ibid., p. 347.
106 Harchran Singh Soti, op. cit., p. 20.
107 Anil Kumar Sarkar, Changing of Phases of Buddhist Thought A Study in the Background of East-West Philosophy, p. 19.
cessation of the *Samsāra*, which has been understood by all the Buddhists as being the 'confections' or 'fabrication'. It is ideas that are the fabricated ones, which we entertain concerning the world and concerning ourselves. As to the bases of existence, they consist of desires, passions, deeds, and the aggregate of the five *Skandhas*, namely, the physical form, the perceptions, the sensations, the mental activity, and the consciousness. “Nirvāṇa, the cessation of activity, and the ether are the sole realities to be admitted from the point of view of absolute truth, so that there is little real distinction between the view of the *Vijñānavāda* and the *Madhyamaka* on this score”.

*Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa* are the highest level in the *Mahāyāna* as identical with infinite spirit, mind, and transcend them both. We understand the ultimate nature of *Samsāra*, it vanished from our consciousness, and there is neither bondage nor release, neither birth nor death. *Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa*, the conditioned and the unconditioned are thought-constructs and are, therefore, devoid of reality. “The *Samsāra* (the cycle of phenomena, the world) is ignorance, desire, and action; it goes without saying that *Nirvāṇa*, the opposite of *Samsāra*, must be the absence of ignorance, desire, and action. The action is the forming of wrong ideas under the influence of ignorance and desire”.

The meaning of the distinction between *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra* is basically only a matter of viewpoint: one in the state of *Nirvāṇa* views things, as they are in themselves, while one in the state of *Samsāra* views objectivity. Hence, the attainment of *Nirvāṇa* turns out to be a matter of enlightenment (*Buddhatā*). *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, already declared that *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra* are ontologically the same reality. *Nāgārjuna* says that there is no difference between *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra*. “Nothing of phenomenal existence (*Samsāra*) is different from *Nirvāṇa*, nothing of *Nirvāṇa* is different from phenomenal existence”.

The term ‘*Samsāra*’ (revolving in the cycle of rebirth) means “the creation of a new life by the influence of the actions of the former living being,” by changing from one form of life to another. “This cycle of rebirth ranges over the whole of the manifested

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108 A. Berriedale Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, p. 242
111 Jaideva Sing, *op. cit.*, p. 29
112 Junjino Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 29.
universe, comprising thirty one abodes of beings with the various form and degrees of consciousness appropriate to their condition".  "Nirvāṇa is the cessation of rebirth. Desire, with action consequent upon desire, is the cause of rebirth". Samsāra is translated as 'transmigration of soul'. But is a very misleading translation, for the idea is not of a soul that lives after the death of the body and move into another body, because Buddhism does not accept the existence of the soul. We would like to explain this by a comparison with the waves on the water. The life of living is like the waves on water; the vibration of the first wave causes the vibration of the next wave and thus the waves are transmitted to a long distance. One wave is one life, and the series of lives is Samsāra.

Buddhism believes that, the series of lives do not go on infinitely as in a straight line. They turn in a circle and repeat the circle over and over again. The wheel of life is a small circle of one life, while the great circle (the series of the wheel of life) is Samsāra. D. T. Suzuki said in the "Outline of Mahāyāna Buddhism" that, "Samsāra is Nirvāṇa, because there is, when viewed from the ultimate nature of the Dharma, nothing going out of, nor coming into, existence: Nirvāṇa is Samsāra, when it is coveted and adhered to".

Samsāra and Nirvāṇa are not two and do not mean that where there is Nirvāṇa, there is Samsāra also, or that where there is Samsāra there is Nirvāṇa; for they issue from different causes. Samsāra and Nirvāṇa cannot appear on the same time, like day and night, black and white. We know the existence of both day and night but when one arises another one is gone. In the same way Samsāra and Nirvāṇa also, cannot appear together, if there is Samsāra, there is not Nirvāṇa, if there is Nirvāṇa, there cannot be Samsāra. According to K. Venkata Ramanan, "there is Samsāra (the course of mundane existence, conditioned becoming) and there is Nirvāṇa (the unconditioned reality); but Samsāra is not as such Nirvāṇa and Nirvāṇa is not another entity apart from Samsāra. And the being of Samsāra is not of the same kind as Nirvāṇa".

So, they are not two, and so are all things, like samsāra and paramnirvāṇa. Duality is only possible by postulating something that is not dualistic. "Nirvāṇa and Samsāra are

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14 L. De La Vallee Poussin, *The Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 139
evidently two, they are not to be merged indiscriminately, but so long as we cling to this dualistic thought we are unable to reach the unifying centre of thought where is the realisation of the Buddhist life. This transcending the duality of existence is called here non-duality”.  

The issue of *Nirvāṇa*, being of central importance to Buddhist practice, requires perhaps further comment. There is no distinguishing feature whatsoever of *Samsāra* (the world of empirical existence) from *Nirvāṇa*. The extent of *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra* is “Mahāmati (except), all things are non-dual; there is no *Nirvāṇa, Mahāmati* (except), where is *Samsāra*; and there is no *Samsāra*, where is *Nirvāṇa*, due to the existence of the state of manifold causation. This is what is meant by ‘All things - (including) the Parinirvāṇa and Samsāra – are non-dual”.

According to the *Mahāyāna*, there is no difference between *Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa*. “They do not constitute two different dimensions of reality. There is no ontological difference between them. There is not even the slightest difference between *Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa*. The realisation of the essencelessness of *Samsāra*, of its Śūnyatā is *Nirvāṇa*”.

The *Mādhyamika* believed that “the *Nirvāṇa* is the indefinable essence which can neither be extinguished as e.g., a desire, nor which can be attained as, e.g., a reward for renunciation, nor which can be annihilated, as, e.g., all the active elements of life, nor which is eternal, as e.g., an absolute principle, which cannot really disappear, nor which can be produced”.  

Nāgārjuna advocated that “*Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa* are the two relative ideas and as such there is no absolute distinction between the two. Both stand on the same footing in respect of each other as regards their significance. Even in apposition, there cannot be any conception of a relation between the two”. He asserted, “There was not a shade of difference between the Absolute and the phenomenal, between *Nirvāṇa* and *Samsāra*. The universe viewed as a whole is the Absolute, viewed as a process, it is the phenomenal”.

119 R. S. Misra, op. cit., p. 192  
121 Dr. K. Krishna Murthy & Dr. K. Padmanabha, *op cit.*, p 26  
122 Theodore Stcherbatsky, *op. cit.* Part I, p 71
The Yogācāras believed that Nirvāṇa was contrary to reason. "If they were real they could not disappear totally. They were, accordingly, declared to have been always quiescent, quiescent or extinct from the outset (ādiśānta). To regard them as active, in the transcendental sense, is an illusion. In that sense, it can be asserted, that Nirvāṇa is real and Samsāra unreal. Samsāra and Nirvāṇa, a different way, extend the cosmic causal process to progressive transcendent psychic orders. They cancel intellectualism involved in the supposition of the apparent cosmic causal processes by transcendent psychic non-dual experience.

In relation to suffering, it means that if craving is the cause of suffering, suffering as the effect of craving becomes the cause of what the Buddhists call Samsāra. So, we would like to explain the cause and the result of relation between suffering and craving, which take effect in Samsāra, as follows:

In practical language, it means that there is an endless series of rebirths, taking place on account of Samsāra having come into being. "This Samsāra is constituted by the experience of suffering and, on the other, by an endless cycle of rebirths. There is suffering because of rebirths, and rebirths are there because of suffering. It is the continuous cycle of rebirths of an individual that constitutes his Samsāra".

The Buddhist doctrines state that the purpose of the Buddhist relation (Buddha-dharma) is to lead out from Samsāric (the cycle of existence) suffering to liberation from suffering which is found only in one state Nirvāṇa. "The Viśṇavādins argued that none of these teachings make any sense on the view that the mind – and therefore suffering itself – is unreal and totally non-existent (abhāva)". According to all the Buddhist Schools, mind or consciousness (Viśṇa), is destroyed in the final Nirvāṇa of total extinction (Nirupādhiśesa Nirvāṇa). "The Viśṇavādins believed that the mind continues to exist and that Samsāra continues to be real, at least as a mental phenomenon, as long as the Nirupādhi-Śesa-Nirvāṇa has not been attained".

123 Ibid., Part II, p. 40
124 Anil Kumar Sarkar, op. cit., p. 47.
125 Moti Lal Pandit, Śānyata: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality, p 13
127 Ibid., p. 9.
5.8.5. The Stage of Holy Person in Buddhism

From the *Mahāyāna* point of view, human beings are divided under two heads: those that are enlightened and those that are ignorant. The former are called Buddhas including also Bodhisattvas, Arahants, and Pratyekabuddhas while the latter comprise all the rest of beings under the general designation of bāla or bālaprihagana-bāla which means 'undeveloped', 'puerile', or 'ignorant', and prihagana 'people different' from the enlightened, that is, the multitudes, or people of ordinary type, whose minds are found engrossed in the pursuit of egotistic pleasures and unawakened to the meaning of life.\(^{128}\)

The cessation of sorrow and change is to be obtained by the completely overcoming ignorance and desire- the attainment of Nirvāṇa. Transcending the six realms is the Path of Holiness, marked by the following stages:

The Śrāvaka Stage: This is divided into four sub-stages:

i. Śrātāpanna: One who has entered the Path, or a beginner in the way of enlightenment, this is the at the lower end of the scale of enlightenment; one will be born seven times when their existence will come to an end (*Nirvāṇa*).

ii. Saknāgāmī: One who has progressed sufficiently to enable him to gain *Nirvāṇa* in the next rebirth. Accordingly, he is known as one who returns but once to the three worlds (of Kāma, Rūpa, Arūpa) through the three or five births and then will attain *Nirvāṇa*.

iii. Anāgāmī: One who returns no more once he leaves the present birth, will attain *Nirvāṇa* in next birth.

iv. Arahant: When all these three knots are in succession promoted to the higher stage, there will be the attainment of Arahantship, which is last stage in the Śrāvakas level. One who has freed himself completely from the wheel of life, and who is to reincarnate no more.\(^{129}\)

The Arahanthood divided into the four divisions of the universality is shown below:

a. *Arahant* of universality of creatures, when there is a grip on the initiative of knowledge of all the creatures is shown.

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\(^{128}\) Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *op. cit.*, p xiii.

b. *Arahant* of universality of vehicles, while one is an expert in all the three vehicles.

c. *Arahant* of universality of the knowledge, while one understands the impersonality of the individuals and of ideas.

d. *Arahant* of universality of *Nirvāṇa*, when transmigration and pacification are not the only saviors; since there is neither difference nor quality nor fault, transmigration and *Nirvāṇa* cannot be distinguished from one another.\(^{130}\)

2. The *Pratyekabuddha* Stage: The word ‘*Pratyeka*’ means ‘private’, ‘individual’, ‘single’, and ‘solitary’. One who has understood the chain of causality (the 12 *Nidānas*). This state is one of enlightenment as contrasted with mere salvation of the *Arahant*, but enlightenment for oneself alone; no attempt being made to influence or assist mankind. “He does not share with others his hard-won knowledge of the means for the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. He believes that others too, driven by the stern reality of the miseries of life, may some day take to the holy path, but does not bother to teach or enlighten them”.\(^{131}\)

3. The *Bodhisattva* Stage: “The word ‘*bodhi*’ means ‘perfect wisdom’ or better ‘transcendental wisdom’, supreme enlightenment. The word ‘*sattva*’ means ‘essence’. The word ‘*bodhi*’ is untranslatable. It is the reflex of the consciousness of *Dharmakāya* in human beings”.\(^{132}\) The *Bodhisattva* is one who renounces the attainment of Arahantship and *Pratyeka* Buddhahood, and having become a candidate for complete Buddhahood strives for the welfare of all sentient beings. He seeks for supreme enlightenment not for himself alone but for all human beings. He has, for its aim, the attainment of supreme Buddhahood. It is, therefore, also called the *Buddhayāna* (the vehicle to Buddhahood) or *Tathāgatayāna* (The vehicle to Tathāgata). He makes the four great vows, and practises the six transcendental virtues (*pāramitās*).

i. The four vows are: (1) to save all beings, (2) to destroy all passions, (3) to know and teach others the truth, (4) to lead others through the path of Buddhahood.

ii. The six *pāramitās* are: (1) almsgiving and teaching the ignorant, (2) keeping

\(^{130}\) Dr (Mrs) Surekha Vijay Limaye, *MA*, p. 26

\(^{131}\) Jaideva Sing, *op. cit.*, p. 31

the *siṇhas* or moral laws, (3) patience and long-suffering, (4) diligence in keeping the vows, (5) meditation or contemplation, and (6) wisdom.

4. The Buddha Stage: He who has attained the goal, achieving supreme and final enlightenment and emancipation, possessing the three bodies of *Nirmāṇakāya; Saṃbhogakāya,* and *Dharmakāya.*

*Nibbāna* or *Nirvāṇa* is a very important teaching of the Buddha for study. It is the highest aim of all Buddhists both of *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna* Systems. It is very deep to understand, because we cannot understand or know through our language or sense organs. But if we realize the ultimate reality by ourselves, we will lead a useful life in this present life and pave the way it shows for a good life in future.

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